





## Thatcher tribe hopes to shuffle back from wilderness

MARGARET Thatcher left few levers in key positions. They are mainly younger activists, new MPs and junior ministers, rather than members of the cabinet itself. They are more Thatcher's grandchildren than Thatcher's children.

One of the most frequent complaints of the Euro-sceptics is how poorly represented they are in government. They contrast a predominantly centre-left cabinet and a more centre-right parliamentary party.

This is reflected, for instance, in the centre-right majority on the executive of the 1992 committee, even though many MPs cannot easily be placed in any ideological spectrum and the pro-Europeans are in a majority.

But in the current upheavals, when the Euro-sceptics are being counted, several have argued that any reshuffle should redress this imbalance.

Their immediate focus is on who might be Chancellor. Euro-sceptics

### RIDDELL ON POLITICS

are divided between wanting Norman Lamont to stay, since he is sympathetic to their underlying goals, and pressing for a successor who is not a strong pro-European.

Their main concern is to block Kenneth Clarke. Their favoured candidate would be either Michael Howard or Peter Lilley, both of whom oppose sterling's re-entry into the exchange-rate mechanism. If a change is delayed for a year or more, then Michael Portillo, with Euro-sceptic credentials, could become Chancellor.

The right would like any early reshuffle to bring into the cabinet Euro-sceptics/Thatcherites such as John Redwood, the local government minister, or David Heathcoat-

Amory, the deputy chief whip. But there are relatively few ministers of state in this group. Others include Michael Forsyth, David Maden and, more independent-mindedly, Jonathan Aiken. So short of potential candidates is the right that some are even pressing for the recall of Kenneth Baker, once a prominent Heathite.

Complaints about the political balance of the government are not new. They were first heard in the mid-1980s when many of the then "wets" either joined the government or were promoted.

Members of the Blue Chip group, the set around Chris Patten, William Waldegrave and John Patten, moved up then and Richard Needham became a minister.

Tristan Garel-Jones, then a whip and one of their friends, was blamed by members of the right-of-centre '92 group as the behind-the-scenes ma-

nipulator responsible for the promotions. A less sinister explanation is that Baroness Thatcher operated a hierarchical system of promotion based on their performance in office.

She dropped prominent "wets" in her 1981 and 1983 reshuffles, and promoted then sympathisers such as Norman Tebbit, Nigel Lawson and Cecil Parkinson.

But there were few successors to them in the middle ranks of the government. By the mid-to-late 1980s most of the talent was among left-of-centre ministers such as Kenneth Clarke, Malcolm Rifkind and Chris Patten.

More Thatcherite ministers, such as Sir Rhodes Boyson, Sir John Stanley and Sir Geoffrey Pattie, fell short of making the cabinet, while others who did, such as John Moore and Peter Rees, disappeared after a few years. Consequently, her final cabinet con-

tained few close allies willing to back her in the November 1990 leadership contest. She found that most of her colleagues around the cabinet table were not "one of us".

Mr Major has not changed the political balance much. While Lady Thatcher, Lord Parkinson and Lord Waddington on the right have left the cabinet, he has promoted both Euro-sceptics such as Mr Portillo and Gillian Shephard as well as pro-Europeans like Virginia Bottomley and Mr Patten.

The result has nonetheless been to leave the Euro-sceptics with only three to four members of the cabinet and the probability that a pro-European majority will continue under either Mr Major or any likely successor.

PETER RIDDELL

PETER TRIVINOR

## Cut and thrust of debate murders the English language

MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

Desperate times, they say, justify desperate measures: but MPs' use of language turns the old rule topsy-turvy. Famines, earthquakes and wars elicit from suave foreign office ministers the blandest of phrases: but bring the Commons back for social security questions on a drizzly Monday and all at once the language goes wild.

Mild men in glasses whose names nobody can remember wave their arms and speak of carnage, treachery and deeds of darkness down at the local benefit office. The more colourless the speaker, the more colourful his adjectives: the drabber the subject the more violent the prose. At home, a delay in processing a welfare claim is an atrocity. Abroad, the slaughter of thousands is an unfortunate setback in the peace process.

"Too little, too late," cried a little-known Opposition social security spokesman called Keith Bradley (Withington), to be upstaged within seconds by a Mr John McFall (Lab, Dumbarton) behind him. McFall painted for MPs a word picture in which "loan sharks" cruised the tenements, removing from his despairing constituents a limb here, a three-piece suite there.

"When," he intoned in a Gaelic cadence, rolling his rrrs dramatically as though declaiming Longfellow or Sir Walter Scott, "will some shaft of sanity penetrate through all the years of foolish actions and botched thinking?" Mr McFall could with no discontinuity have rolled onward into:

"Come back! Come back!" he cried in grief.

Across the stormy water,

"And I'll forgive your Highland chief."

My daughter, oh my daughter!

The subject under scrutiny was a review of the allocation of social fund money to local DSS offices.

Not to be outdone in the inter-regional hyperbole elided, Merseyside's Robert Wareing (Lab, Liverpool West Derby), chimed in with an impromptu passage about the Cabinet "sacrificing the aged and the disabled on the altar of their own incompetence".

As the minister stammered out his reply, Dennis Wheatley-like images of butchery and pagan sacrifice, severed limbs, broken walking-sticks, smashed zimmer frames, mangled wheelchairs and the pitiful bleatings of the elderly wheeled through the caverns of our minds, mingling with the cackles of Tory ministers swinging bloody axes in druidical robes.

The question was about the maintenance of the real value of social security benefits during the next upgrading.

Peter Lilley, the fresh-faced secretary of state once identified by Gallup as the least-recognised Cabinet minister in modern history, and an unlikely axeman, swung back with excitable language about Labour "wiping out" the life savings of pensioners, then yielded to the inoffensive-looking Charles Hendry (C, High Peak).

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker forgot his name, and called him "Mr Banks". The real Mr Banks, the Tory MP for Southport, had warned us in his maiden speech last week that he and Hendry were both "on the chubby side" and nobody could tell them apart.

Hendry, distressed that fellow MPs could not remember his face but determined that they would remember his metaphor, found (in something or other) "a cast iron demonstration" of the government's largesse. Lilley thanked him, remarked that nobody could remember who he was, either, and added that at least he had never been confused with a socialist. He meant Tony Banks (Lab, Newham North-West). Clearly he was unaware of the existence of Southport's Mr Matthew Banks...

As we clear so far reader? Madam Speaker has forgotten who Mr Hendry is and Mr Lilley, whom the public have never been able to remember, has forgotten who Mr Banks is. Beside Mr Lilley is sitting Mr Lidington, whom Madam Speaker confuses with Mr Evans, who is sitting in front of Mr Hendry. Lidington (David) and Evans (Nigel) have crinkly black hair, pointed chins and twinkling little smiles. Hendry (Charles) and Banks (Matthew) have bland, genial faces and chubby bodies.

And now rises Labour's Donald Dewar, who sneers at Lilley for his anonymity and offers advice on how to stay as unknown as he is.

Lilley hits back. "Talk about anonymity comes a bit rich from the hon gentleman, whose only claim to fame is that he is less well known than I am." Dewar seethes. Madam Speaker consults her books of photographs, lest she forget another name...

And we, readers, must leave them. Outside it is drizzling. Within, the lights are bright, tempers hot and the prose blazing. As MPs move, firing on all metaphors, to a discussion on "amending the income support regulations to extend entitlement to the severe disability premium to claimants living with non-dependants" (question 9), the parliamentary clerks sit snoring, the English language lies bleeding, and we tiptoe quietly away.

## Minority party MPs prepare to deny Major their support

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE minority parties holding the key to tomorrow night's vote on Maastricht remained determined last night to oppose the government with only one exception. However, some of the 25 MPs from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales appear open to persuasion.

All but one of Northern Ireland's 17 MPs have indicated that they will hold to their anti-Maastricht line. The nationalist parties, four Plaid Cymru MPs and three Scottish Nationalists also made clear their intention to join Labour in the division lobbies in spite of supporting the treaty.

The government can so far

count on support from only one MP from the nationalist minority parties: Sir James Kilfedder, the Ulster Unionist party MP for North Down, who sits with the Tories. Doubt remains about whether ministers or whips can tempt others into the government's lobbies with promises of new jobs, contracts or grants for their areas.

The tactics of the minority parties vary. If it became a vote of confidence in the government, the 13 Unionist MPs made clear yesterday that they would vote with the Conservatives. But Ulster's four Social and Democrat Unionists and the seven nationalist MPs

would back Labour. Ulster Unionist MPs who have long campaigned against the treaty appeared determined to vote against the government. Ian Paisley and his two fellow Democratic Unionists will also oppose the government.

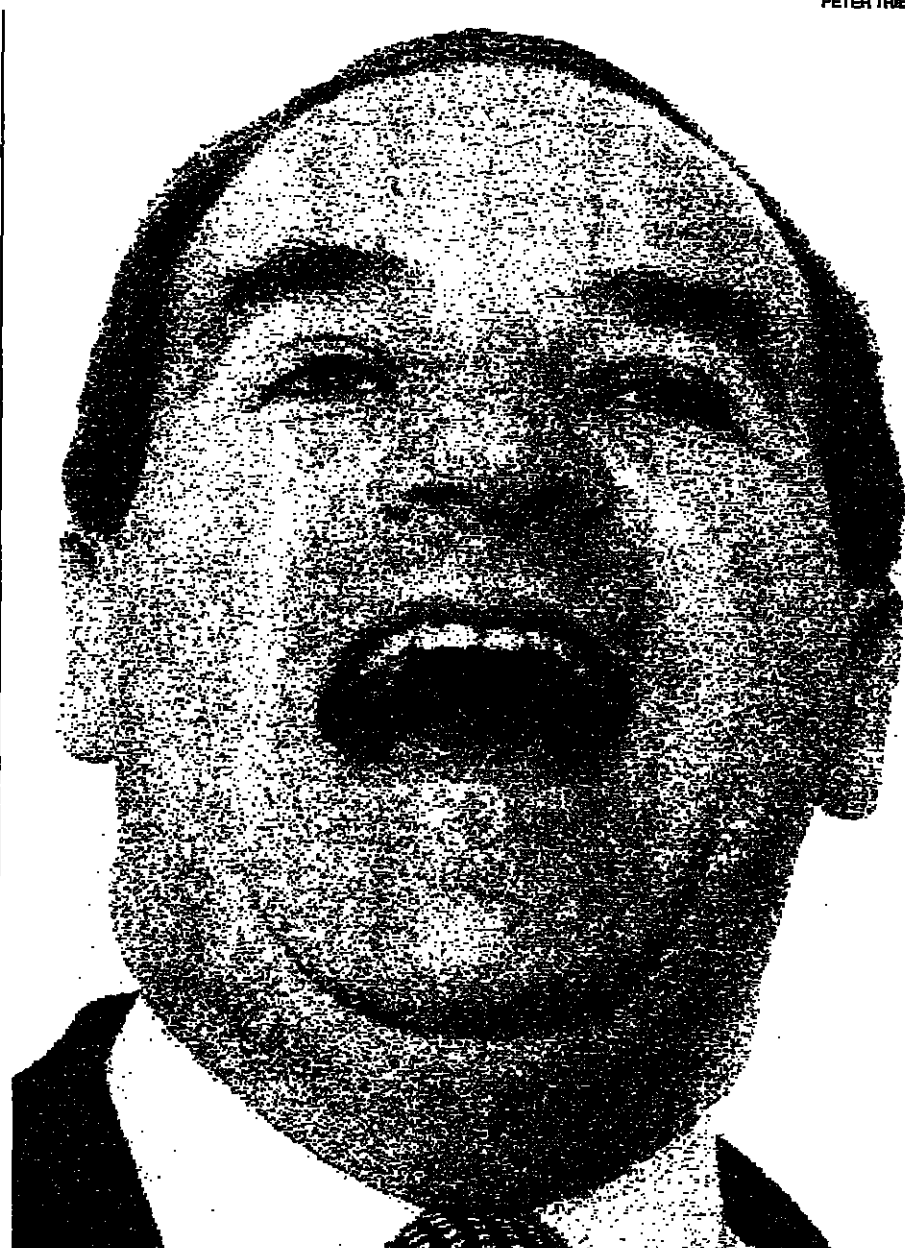
A decision will be taken by the nine Ulster Unionists, led by James Moynihan, at a meeting tomorrow morning. David Trimble, Ulster Unionist MP for Upper Bann, said last night that his party had made a general election manifesto commitment to oppose the treaty. Only the threat of a general election was likely to sway the party, which he said was more opposed to Kevin McNamara, Labour's Northern Ireland spokesman, than it was to Maastricht.

He did not expect any change in his party's voting intentions. "It's not in our interests to be seen as becoming involved in sordid deals with one side or the other."

Dafydd Wigley, one of four Plaid Cymru MPs, called for a meeting with Labour to co-ordinate the opposition parties' strategy. He said: "We will be seeking to indicate our lack of confidence in the government's handling of Maastricht by voting on whichever amendment is closest to a no-confidence vote."

The three Scottish Nationalist MPs also called on the Labour leader to meet all opposition party leaders. Margaret Ewing, the SNP parliamentary leader, told John Smith in a letter that the only prospect of defeating the government lay in uniting all the opposition parties behind an amendment that could attract support from Tory rebels and would be voted on before the government's motion. She said the Liberal Democrats might be persuaded to vote first for an opposition amendment if it did not compromise their pro-Maastricht position, but expressed a lack of confidence in the government's handling of the treaty.

Paddy Ashdown was succeeding last night in holding most Liberal Democrat MPs to his strategy of backing the government's Maastricht motion tomorrow night in spite of taunts from Labour and Tory MPs. So far only one of the 20 Liberal Democrats has broken ranks, Nick Harvey, MP for North Devon.



Speaking out: Sir Leon yesterday. He said British business needs Maastricht

## Brittan says single market will collapse if treaty is not ratified

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

IF the Maastricht treaty is not ratified, the European Community will be unable to complete the single European market, Sir Leon Brittan, the senior British EC commissioner, said yesterday.

Pouring scorn on the argument that the EC could go ahead with the single market while rejecting Maastricht, he said this was not an option. Completing the market depended on a sense of dynamism and the way in which the legislation was implemented. If the EC came to a grinding halt after a rejection of the treaty, there would be no dynamism in interpreting the letter or spirit of the single market legislation.

Sir Leon, speaking to the European Movement, also gave a warning that inward investment in Britain would suffer if the treaty was not ratified. Americans and Japanese would ask themselves: is

Britain going ahead with its partners or holding back? Already, he said, such talk was having a damaging effect. This was why the government was rightly focusing on the treaty at a time of high unemployment: the two were inseparable.

Sir Leon called for Maastricht to be put forward on its merits, "not as an exercise in damage limitation". If parliament voted against the motion tomorrow, he predicted damage to the whole Community. Britain would bring the EC momentum to a halt, and other EC members determined to go ahead would set up alternative structures, crucial to Britain's economy and security, over which Britain would have no control. Something Sir Leon called "every prime minister's nightmare".

If the bill passed, "I hope that people will applaud the

government's courage in taking such a bold course", he said. The government could then use its regained authority to press for a firm declaration on subsidiarity at the Edinburgh summit, a solution to EC finances, the beginning of talks on admitting new members and a basis for a second Danish referendum.

Sir Leon accused the Labour party of throwing away for short-term gain all the credibility it had built up with its painful shift in policy on Europe. A vote against Maastricht would be a "triumph of opportunism over statesmanship". He would deeply regret it if the Labour party used procedural reasons as a pretext to defeat the government.

The government had made efforts to avoid falling out of the exchange-rate mechanism, but now it should use the devaluation to cut interest rates.

## Motley crew must build cohesive force

BY NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE wagon trains of the backbench Tory rebellion over the Maastricht treaty were being pulled into ever tighter circles last night. As Westminster buzzed with casualty figures, both real and imagined, in the crossfire with government whips, rebel leaders were meeting to plot their tactics for the Commons vote tomorrow night that seems likely to decide John Major's fate.

Michael Spicer, James Cran, Christopher Gill and Roger Knapman have emerged as the driving forces behind an uprising that, with Labour help, threatens Mr Major's premiership. Despite a weekend of intense pressure by the whips, the rebels were still claiming a strength of some 50 MPs, 40 of whom were "solid" in their determination to vote against the government. This is theoretically nine more than is needed for victory.

But as Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, joined Mr Major and Michael Heseltine in the "charm offensive"

aimed at winning over waverers, rebels were aware that promises of support have a habit of melting away at the critical moment.

One rebel leader spoke of the importance of building up "corporate spirit" in the face of the establishment onslaught. They plan a meeting tonight open to all those who have indicated they are prepared to defy the whips. The challenge is to weld a motley group into a cohesive force that can withstand all the promises and threats that will be hurled at them.

Mr Major's equanimity is unlikely to be improved by claims by some ministers that they faced an uphill struggle. The election, has been telephoning sympathetic former colleagues and lending it be the right-wing candidate in any ensuing leadership contest.

After the weekend wobble precipitated by the government's cleverly constructed motion for tomorrow's debate,

the rebels appeared in good heart. One of their leaders said he had been surprised how their numbers were holding up. "I would have thought it would have begun to fray at the edges, but it has not. If anything, it's got firmer."

Another rebel claimed to detect signs of desperation among the whips as they grappled with the grim arithmetic of potential defeat. Pointing to the whips' office and predicting another government U-turn, he said: "We have always said that there are more than 50 on our side. There is panic about and reality is about to break in."

In a tacit admission that they faced an uphill struggle, one whip commented that it was "too soon to tell" how the vote would break. Another of the government's Commons aides said the rebels were "typing up" their numbers but conceded that they probably had a strength in the "high 20s".

Mr Major met a group of about 15 MPs yesterday in his

Commons room and is due to host another meeting today. Mr Hurd is to see about half a dozen waverers one by one over the next couple of days.

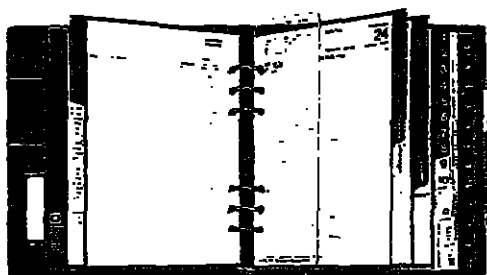
Mr Major's personal plight is one of many factors being weighed by wavering MPs as they seek to make up their minds. One right-winger confessed he was worried about the prospect of defeating the government and so precipitating the prime minister's resignation. "I don't like the treaty at all. But I don't want to damage in any way the position of the prime minister. If he resigns, the likelihood is that he will be replaced by someone far more pro-European such as Clarke, Heseltine or Hurd."

Another MP, who has returned to the government fold after flirting with the rebel camp, said the vote was about far more than Maastricht. "I am not in the business of knifing people in the back. There is a different agenda around now and I am not prepared to be part of that."

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## Major woos the Tory waverers

Continued from page 1

Andrew Robathan, John Sykes and Charles Hendry.

The cabinet offensive had earlier been launched by Mr Heseltine and Mr Clarke. Mr Heseltine said that defeat would lead to a "policy vacuum of incalculable destructiveness." He insisted, however, that the government would not lose the vote, adding: "I think we are going to win because people are listening to the arguments, there is intense discussion going on. People faced now with the clarity of what is happening are actually moving back to support John Major and the government."

"Maastricht is at the centre of restoring confidence to this country's trading economy. Our opponents in France, Germany and Italy - who are competing with us in the sense of looking for opportunities for investment in their own countries - will tell the Americans, the Japanese, the Koreans and all these countries we want to get investment from, that Britain has marginalised itself."

Mr Clarke also predicted that the government would win, saying defeat "would leave us frozen in the ice, unable to move for some period."

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## Germany may rejoin EFA project

BY MICHAEL EVANS

DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

GERMANY appears to have taken the first step towards returning as a full partner in the four-nation European Fighter Aircraft programme, following a study which outlined ways of reducing costs by up to 30 per cent.

British industry officials believe there is now "a detectable change of mood" in Germany, although a formal statement from Bonn yesterday gave little hint of a switch in policy. Responding to German press reports that the government was now willing to accept a lower-budget EFA and would not try to convince its partners to give up the programme, Bonn said it was striving for agreement with Britain, Italy and Spain to develop a cheaper version of the aircraft and hoped to bring in other countries to share the cost.

The 30 per cent cost reduction was outlined in a report by the European industries involved in EFA. The three-month study examined seven alternative airframes, only two of which proved to be cheaper than EFA. Each offers poor combat performance.

British industry sources said: "There's still good reason to be cautious but there is now more optimism that Germany will stay in the programme."



# Sex attacker accused of faking insanity to avoid jail sentence

By BILL FROST

A CONVICTED sex attacker fooled eight psychiatrists into thinking he was mentally ill so he would be sent to hospital rather than given a long jail sentence, a jury at the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

Winston Thomas claimed he had a history of psychiatric illness and that he had received treatment in Jamaica. He said he could not resist the voice of a boyhood friend called Delroy, who had drowned, and claimed to believe that the television and

radio were sending him special messages. All the claims were lies, Anthony Longden, for the prosecution, told the jury.

Thomas, 47, was never treated for mental illness in Jamaica and Delroy — "the voice from the grave" — was alive and well, Mr Longden said.

Thomas denies attempting to pervert the course of justice. He was originally charged after he was arrested for carrying out a string of sex

offences and robberies in north London in 1989. He was finally caught when he attacked WPC Veneta Aldous, who had been set up as bait after he raped two women.

Mr Longden said the present charge related to lies Thomas told during assessment interviews with psychiatrists, which were aimed at making sure he was sentenced under the Mental Health Act rather than jailed.

The doctors duped by Thomas included a psychiatrist based at Brixton prison, south London. Thomas, Mr Longden said, was arrested in 1989 for attacks on six women and remanded to Brixton's hospital wing — giving him "ample opportunity to see the behaviour of people who were genuinely disturbed". He copied symptoms, shook during interviews with the doctors, and "consistently lied".

Once he reached Rampton Hospital his symptoms of schizophrenia disappeared. Last year Thomas told a mental health review tribunal he was not mentally ill and never had been. He admitted lying to the doctors. The tribunal discharged him, said Mr Longden.

Thomas, of Wood Green, north London, was arrested in January 1989. In June he admitted two rapes, two robberies and three assaults involving a total of six women. Before he was sentenced, he was remanded for psychiatric reports and seen by a number of doctors. They variously concluded that he was schizophrenic or suffering from a psychotic illness which could be drink or drug-induced.

When he had been sentenced at the Old Bailey, a senior judge said: "I have no hesitation in accepting medical evidence that you were mentally ill when you committed these offences and are still mentally ill and represent a great danger to the public." The trial continues.



Thomas: claimed radio sent him messages



WPC Aldous: sent as bait to trap Thomas

## Court bans publicity on 'divorce' girl

By TIM JONES

THE High Court yesterday made an order forbidding a girl aged 14 who is effectively seeking to "divorce" her parents from being identified for four years until she reaches the age of majority.

As first reported in *The Times*, the girl has instructed lawyers to seek a court order so that she could legally separate from her parents and live elsewhere. The girl, described as mature and sensible, has chosen to live with the family of her boy friend where she is regarded as a friend of the family. She is said to have a clear idea of what she wants to do and is planning eventually to go to university.

It is understood the girl instigated the proceedings because of the prospect of the return of her father, who is divorced from her mother, to the family home. Her relationship with her father has not good and the prospect of his return caused her to begin what is thought to be the first case of its kind in Britain.

The case follows the action in the United States where Gregory Kingsley, aged 12, secured a "divorce" from his parents so that he could be adopted by his foster parents.

Yesterday, Mr Justice Scott-Baker, sitting in the family division, approved a detailed order designed to protect the girl from being identified in any way.

However, after hearing arguments from barristers representing the girl, the *Daily Mail* and of the Official Solicitor, the judge made an order which did not appear to prohibit the natural parents of the girl with whom she does not live, from being approached. Lawyers were unclear whether to do so would be a breach of the order, which was written in such a way as to cause some confusion.

On Monday, the judge had made an order forbidding the natural parents from communicating about their daughter to any newspaper or television company. He had also barred media representatives from approaching within 100 yards of the address in Surrey where the girl now lives.

A full hearing with all parties represented, including the parents, the woman with whom the girl is now living and the girl, is scheduled for November 13, in Chambers. The action is being taken under the Children Act, 1989.

Aftermath: firemen carry furniture from the house

## History 'up in smoke'

LADY du Cann has vowed that Athelhampton Hall in Dorset, badly damaged by fire yesterday morning, will re-open to the public again next year. In tears as she surveyed the damage to the Tudor house, she said: "It is terribly distressing to watch hundreds of years of history going up in smoke. How can you put a value on something like that?"

More than 80 firemen in 15 vehicles went to the blaze, which is believed to have started in the east wing of the house owned by Lady du Cann, wife of Sir Edward du Cann, former chairman of Lough and of the Conservative party. Two thirds of the rooms have been destroyed, including three main bedrooms, a dining room and the

green parlour. Local people worked in driving rain to help firemen to rescue valuable and antiques, but the operation had to be abandoned when slates began falling from the burning roof and many of the contents are feared lost. The fire, fanned by strong winds, took five hours to bring under control. Part of the roof was reported to have collapsed and four firemen were taken to hospital after being hit by falling beams.

The fire is believed to have started when a curtain ignited after being left too close to an electric light bulb. Athelhampton is managed for Lady du Cann by her son, Patrick Cooke, and is open to the public for part of the year; it closed for the season last Wednesday.

These were enforced with varying zeal, depending on the state of Anglo-Soviet relations. Unlike America, no part of Britain was formally closed, in spite of Soviet complaints that naval attaches were inexplicably unable to take a family picnic at Holy Loch, and "journalists" could not gather news on Salisbury Plain.

The Foreign Office dropped repeated hints that the ban would be lifted when Russia did the same. Other parts of the former Soviet Union responded quickly — Ukraine and the Baltics have dropped the ban — but Russia took its time: the foreign ministry press department is one of the last outposts of bureaucratic obstructionism.



Stooping to conquer: Michael Grade lights his trademark cigar from one of ten candles on a gigantic birthday cake yesterday

## Channel 4 celebrates 10 years of something for everyone

MICHAEL Grade said he preferred to look to the next ten years of Channel 4 rather than dwell on past achievements as he celebrated the channel's tenth anniversary yesterday (Melinda Wittstock writes).

The flamboyant chief executive is now almost as closely identified with Channel 4 as the multicoloured 4 that first fragmented on air into *Brookside*, *Countdown* and *Walter*. Stephen Frear's wintery tale about a mentally-handicapped man.

Viewed as the last great act of altruism in British television, Channel 4 was set up not to make money but to make "innovative and experimental" programmes that appealed to "tastes and interests not generally catered for by ITV". But a lot has changed since Tory MPs demanded the closure of the channel by Christmas 1982 after it revealed plans to show a programme called *One In Five* about gays and lesbians.

Today Channel 4, having won the

Tories' respect for encouraging enterprise culture through the independent production sector which serves it, has a solid 10.5 per cent audience share. But tension between commercial demands and fulfilment of its minority remit has increased, particularly as the channel gears up to sell its own advertising airtime from January 1 in competition with ITV.

Mr Grade has been attacked in the past two years for "selling out" by relying too much on bought-in Ameri-

can series such as *Cheers* and *Roseanne* to boost ratings. But he believes Channel 4 is every bit as unique as it was under his predecessor, Jeremy Isaacs, who left for the Royal Opera House in 1987. While full of praise for what he called Mr Isaacs' "vision", Mr Grade argues that programmes such as *Cheers* or repeats of *Inspector Morse* make the channel's more esoteric output possible by guaranteeing audiences big enough to attract advertisers.

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## Russians win travel right in UK

By MICHAEL BINYON  
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

NO LONGER will the men from M15 peer up from their newspapers at the Slavic figures posing as unlikely tourists in Portsmouth or Cheltenham. No more will unmarked Vauxhalls wait in lay-bys 25 miles from Hyde Park Corner for Soviet embassy cars sneaking out beyond the limits.

From today, Russians are free to come and go as they please in Britain for the first time in 40 years. The Foreign Office yesterday announced that travel restrictions, imposed at the height of the Cold war, have been abolished.

Russians are no longer restricted to the centre of London, nor do they need to apply for travel permission two days before an intended journey. They can take a train straight to GCHQ, Fylingdales or Holy Loch and all they need is the fare.

Britons in Russia are luckier. Closed zones and travel restrictions were abolished on October 19. Huge vistas are suddenly opened to diplomats, journalists and businessmen — an area once covering half the Soviet Union is open to prying foreign eyes. Future Sakharovs cannot be safely sent into exile in Gorki, 250 miles from Moscow — the industrial town has reverted to its old name, Nizhni Novgorod, and welcomes foreigners and their dollars.

Stalin imposed formal travel restrictions in 1941, ostensibly for military security. All border areas, centres of heavy industry and areas of ethnic unrest were closed. Britain took 11 years before applying its-for-tat rules.

These were enforced with varying zeal, depending on the state of Anglo-Soviet relations. Unlike America, no part of Britain was formally closed, in spite of Soviet complaints that naval attaches were inexplicably unable to take a family picnic at Holy Loch, and "journalists" could not gather news on Salisbury Plain.

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# Sealed-in scientists need breath of fresh air in their imperfect world

■ The possibility of man colonising other planets has moved further into the future with the setbacks to a sealed mini-world in the Arizona desert

BY NIGEL HAWKES  
SCIENCE EDITOR

HALFWAY through their two-year mission to create a sealed world in the Arizona desert, the eight men and women inside Biosphere 2 face growing problems. Two are now breathing pure oxygen at night to offset the potentially dangerous deterioration in air quality inside the three-acre greenhouse.

Dr Roy Walford, the crew's physician, and Jane Poynter, an English-born inmate, have both had trouble sleeping and feel constantly tired, which are symptoms of oxygen deficiency.

The air inside Biosphere 2 is now so thin that it is equivalent to that found at a height of 11,500ft. Yesterday morning, flexible tubing and nasal tubes were passed inside so that other crew members can take a whiff of oxygen if they need it. Oxygen levels have fallen steadily since the structure was sealed in September 1991, despite

the claim that the complex would be self-sustaining. Drugs for altitude sickness have now been passed through Biosphere 2's airtight to help the crew.

The Biospherians' oxygen problem is the latest in a series of setbacks to hit the \$150 million experiment, funded by Ed Bass, a Texan billionaire. The idea was to create a world in miniature as a model for future space settlements.

However, Walter Adey, director of the marine systems laboratory at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, who was involved in the design of the ocean and marsh inside Biosphere 2, resigned in September 1990, complaining that the project was more to do with tourism than science.

Recent visitors say the ocean has turned a sludgy green, though Space Biospheres Ventures, the group responsible for Biosphere 2, claim that this is evidence of its high productivity. There



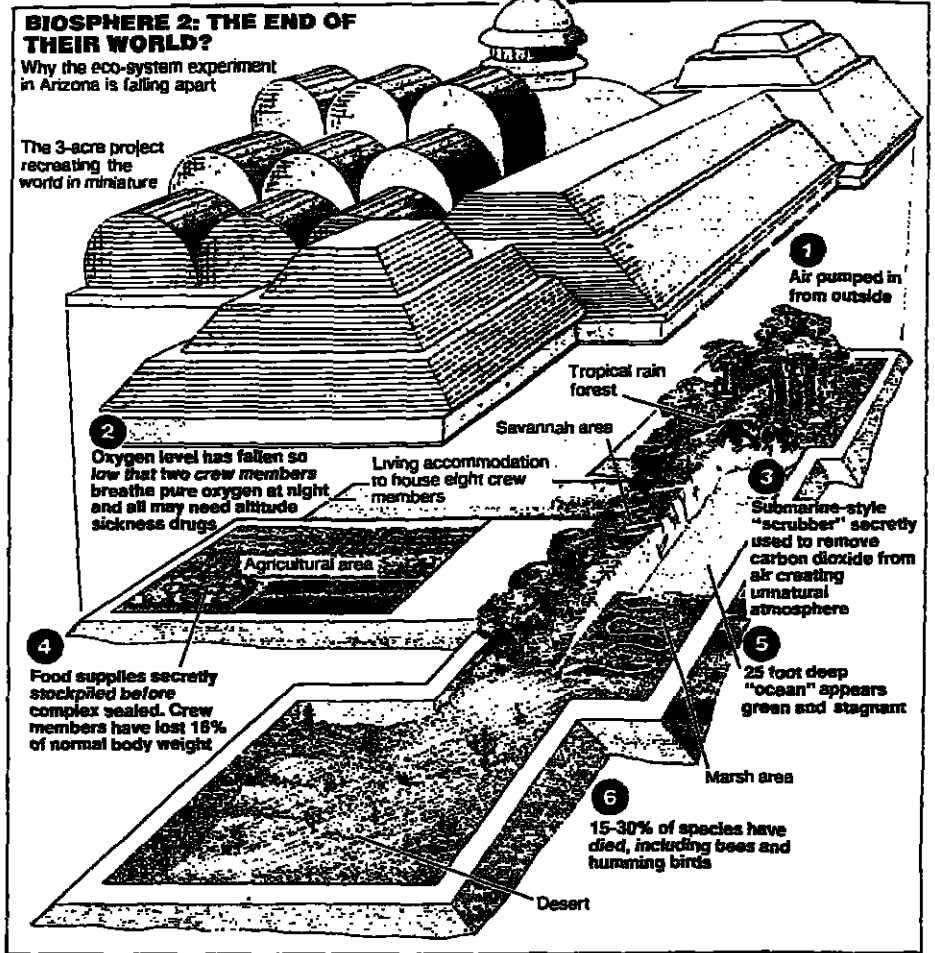
Glasshouse goes wrong: healthy Biospherians at the start of the experiment

have been other problems, including the admission that a large volume of extra air had been added last December, without any public acknowledgment.

Now, just over a year after the doors were sealed, some 15 to 30 per cent of the original 3,800 species of plants and animals have

died. The bees and hummingbirds needed to pollinate the plants have disappeared and the crew has lost weight after a poor harvest. SBV said falling oxygen levels provided an opportunity for serious science, and was monitoring them carefully to make sure they did not fall below 13.6 per cent, the level at which

humans risked brain damage or strokes. The crew is unmoved by the fuss. "So many people were saying that we would be out right after Christmas, and I don't think we will come out until we're supposed to," crew member Linda Leigh said recently by telephone.



BIOSPHERE 2: THE END OF THEIR WORLD? Why the eco-system experiment in Arizona is falling apart

The 3-acre project recreating the world in miniature

1 Air pumped in from outside

2 Oxygen level has fallen so low that two crew members breathe pure oxygen at night and all may need altitude sickness drugs

3 Living accommodation to house eight crew members

4 Agricultural area

5 Food supplies secretly stockpiled before complex sealed. Crew members have lost 10% of normal body weight

6 25 foot deep "ocean" appears green and stagnant

7 15-30% of species have died, including bees and humming birds

8 Desert

## Knifeman killed sergeant and stabbed PCs, court told

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A BURGLAR prepared to kill anyone who got in his way stabbed a London police sergeant to death, murdered two householders in their homes and seriously wounded two other officers in a catalogue of crime last autumn. The Old Bailey was told yesterday.

Nicholas Vernage, of no fixed address, denies murdering Sgt Alan King on November 28, last year, and attempting to murder PCs Simon Castrey and John Jenkinson the following day. He also denies murdering Lorna Bogle, who was stabbed at her home in Walthamstow, east London, on November 21, and killing Javid Iqbal at his home in Leytonstone, east London, on November 24. Mr Vernage has also denied two other burglaries on October 28 and November 14. Peter Grenfell, 29, of Leyton,



Sgt King: tried to crawl to safety

east London, denies murdering Sgt King and attempting to murder the two constables.

Opening the prosecution case yesterday, John Nutting QC told the court: "Vernage murdered or was prepared to murder anyone, householder

or policeman, who got in his way." Mr Nutting said that Mr Grenfell told detectives Mr Vernage had boasted: "All I want is to kill a copper." He wanted to "have a war" with the police and said: "Whichever officer gets in my way, they are getting it. I will put them to sleep."

Sgt King died after Mr Vernage and Mr Grenfell committed burglary on November 28, ransacking premises while the owners were away. The sergeant had stopped to investigate a stolen Corina car parked in an east London street when he was attacked. Even as Sgt King tried to crawl to safety, Mr Vernage allegedly shouted: "He is still alive. I am going to get him."

As the policeman reached a passing car, Mr Vernage caught up with him and

plunged the knife into his body again. Mr Nutting said. The motorist drove the dying officer to a nearby police station. Sgt King had four stab wounds in his head and neck and four in his chest, which had ruptured his spleen and liver and punctured his heart.

The next day, Mr Vernage and Mr Grenfell were approached by officers in Thornhill Heath. Mr Vernage drew a knife from his back pocket and stabbed PC Jenkinson in the neck. Mr Grenfell immediately ran off. PC Castrey went to follow Mr Grenfell but realised that Mr Vernage was continuing to stab PC Jenkinson. PC Castrey drew his truncheon and came at Mr Vernage, the court heard.

Mr Nutting said Mr Vernage then stabbed PC Castrey. Mr Vernage tried to get the keys to his car from PC Jenkinson, but the policeman held on to them and Mr Vernage fled. He was tracked down to the back garden of a house with the knife in his hand. The lock knife, the court was told, was almost certainly the one used to kill Sgt King and was probably used to murder Miss Vogle and Mr Iqbal.

Detailing the "catalogue of crime", Mr Nutting said Mr Vernage used a credit card stolen in the first burglary to buy a pair of training shoes. Footprints from these were found at the scenes of other burglaries and where Miss Vogle died.

Mr Vernage had stabbed Miss Vogle, whom he knew, 21 times and stole property from her flat, it was alleged. Mr Nutting said a neighbour of Miss Vogle heard a noise and looked through her letter box. She was on the ground with a man crouching over her. Asked if she was all right, Miss Vogle, at the man's instigation, said it was a tiff.

Miss Vogle had been stabbed in the chest and back. Mr Iqbal was stabbed in the heart. His body was found outside his back door. The trial continues tomorrow.

## Mackay examines routes to divorce

BY FRANCES GIBB  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

COUPLES intending to divorce may be forced to go through mediation or conciliation sessions under proposals being considered by Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor.

Alternatively, they may be deemed ineligible for legal aid unless they attend at least one mediation session. The proposals are among a range of options being examined by officials as they prepare a consultation paper on divorce law reform to be published next year. Officials are looking equally at possibilities that would avoid the controversial element of compulsion. These could give courts greater powers to refer people to mediation and conciliation on a voluntary basis, as recommended by the Law Commission.

Lord Mackay told the Law Society conference in Birmingham two weeks ago that he wanted to see a "wider use of mediation which avoids at least one of the disputes that are now settled through matrimonial legal aid". He said that there should be incentives to reach agreement.

The Law Commission, in its report on divorce law reform in November 1990, and organisations involved in mediation services, are strongly against compulsory mediation as being a "contradiction in terms". One lawyer involved in mediation said: "The idea that couples could be obliged to sit in the same room and attempt to negotiate an agreed solution where their interests are directly opposed and the level of hostility so high that they are unable to speak to each other could be regarded as a little eccentric."

Other ways of giving mediation a bigger role in the divorce process would attract greater support. One would involve a new power for courts to adjourn proceedings so that couples could take part in mediation voluntarily.

## Sotheby's hammered over buyers' charge

BY SARAH JANE CHECKLAND, ART MARKET CORRESPONDENT

SOTHEBY'S has angered much of the art market by introducing an extra charge on buyers. Instead of a 10 per cent buyer's fee, charged since 1975, from January 1 clients will be obliged to pay 15 per cent on items up to £50,000. For lots costing more, they will pay 15 per cent on the first £50,000 and 10 per cent on the remainder.

Christie's said yesterday that it was considering similar charges.

The move comes a week after Lord Gower and Lord Carrington, the chairman of Sotheby's and Christie's respectively, signed a letter to the Times condemning European Community plans to impose value-added tax on works of art entering the EC. It said: "At present, such imports into Britain are free of VAT and this is a major factor in the leading position of the London art market... The effect of an import tax would be to divert this trade towards countries outside the Community."

George Levy, a former president of the British Antique Dealers' Association, said the latest move was "a complete contradiction to what was said in the letter, and it would

appear they want it both ways. They don't want the government to charge the 5 per cent tax on imports, but want to take the 5 per cent themselves."

Charles Lee, another former BADA president, said: "Sotheby's are seen as the market leaders. It gives the unfair suggestion that everybody in the art market is in desperate straits. They have put up the charge for a reason." On top of the threat to the market by the EC directives, he said, the move was a "smack in the eye".

"No other industry charges both buyer and seller. They will be charging 25 per cent to their customers," he added. Christopher Elwes, the managing director of Bonhams, the more modest auction house based in Knightsbridge, said: "I am amazed at Sotheby's insensitivity. This shows Sotheby's disdain for the lower, real market."

Lord Gower said: "We are not too gloomy in general [about sales figures] but we have to face the fact that commission levels are lower than we had hoped." He said the maximum extra charge on a buyer would be £1,500.

## Eton joins the ranks of teacher trainers

BY MATTHEW D'ANCONA  
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

FOUR student teachers will start work in the hallowed classrooms of Eton College this week before moving to a comprehensive next term, the first time that a great public school has taken part in teacher training.

Eton is collaborating with the Douay Martyrs School in Ickham, west London, in the training of ten teachers taking the PGCE course at the Institute of Education in London. The four already at Eton will teach their own specialist subjects, English, history, mathematics and biology, and join experienced teachers in other classes.

Eric Anderson, the headmaster of Eton, said he hoped other private schools would follow its lead. "We thought it would be a good chance to forge a link between two schools which are rather different to give students a wide experience. Douay Martyrs is a Catholic school and we're Anglican. They're a day school, we're boarding. They're non-selective, we're selective."

The scheme will bolster Eton's reputation for social liberalism, after its successful summer courses for state school pupils. Dr Anderson said that the joint venture with Douay Martyrs was an imaginative response to the new school-based system of teacher training, rather than a contrived exercise in classlessness. "We just want to give the students experience of two good schools."

Marie Stubbs, head teacher of Douay Martyrs, which has 1,100 pupils, said that the trainees would have a unique glimpse of two entirely different worlds. "It will be interesting for teachers to meet pupils from a national profile at Eton and a metropolitan background at our school. They will first go to a school which has hundreds of years of tradition and then to another which has 30 years of history."

## Warm homes give elderly little protection against hypothermia

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

WARM homes do not protect old people from becoming severely chilled and developing hypothermia, according to research that undermines the conventional view about the causes of the condition.

Preliminary findings from a survey of 900 old people show that almost one in ten is at risk of hypothermia but living in a warm home provides little defence against it. People with central heating are at equal risk of becoming severely chilled as those living in poorer, colder housing on welfare benefits.

The survey, by the Age Concern Institute of Gerontology, suggests that 750,000 people in Britain may be at risk of hypothermia, defined as a deep body temperature of 35.5C or below, (normal temperature is 37C). The proportion at risk was "very similar"

to that found in a survey 20 years ago in spite of improvements in living conditions, according to Ann Salvage, who conducted the research.

"The results show that it is not easy to identify the groups at particular risk," she said. "It is not the oldest or the thinnest or the poorest. The explanation of hypothermia is not totally straightforward."

Dr Ken Collins, consultant in geriatric medicine at St Pancras Hospital, London, said the causes were mainly physiological and affected rich and poor alike. "A lot of it is due to the general rundown in all bodily systems with advancing age, which shows itself in a lower body temperature."

Between 40,000 and 80,000 extra deaths occur in winter and the high mortality has prompted campaigns for

extra heating allowances and better insulated homes. Most of the ill-effects caused by the cold are the result of exposure outside the home. Many elderly people succumb when they experience a blast of icy air, which exacerbates heart and respiratory problems.

"When a very cold wind blows on the face it sets off a series of reflexes which can lead to collapse and death in an old person," Dr Collins said.

The Age Concern survey, to be published next February, found that most old people felt uncomfortably cold, which could make them more prone to illness. Almost a quarter said they had stopped buying basic necessities like food to pay fuel bills and nearly two thirds said that if they had an extra £10 a week they would spend some or all of it on extra heating.

## Court clears Greenpeace activists

TWENTY-TWO Greenpeace activists who staged a commando-style raid to block toxic discharges into the sea from a chemical plant at Whitehaven in Cumbria were cleared of criminal damage yesterday after the prosecution offered no evidence.

At Carlisle Crown Court Judge Alistair Bell awarded the defendants — 16 men and six women — legal costs likely to exceed £100,000.

The trial, scheduled to last three weeks, ended on the first day after Anthony Morris QC, prosecuting, said internal documents recently released to the Crown Prosecution Service by Albright & Wilson, detergent makers, left doubt as to whether the raid on September 11 last year had damaged a company pipeline.

The firm has spent £2.6 million building a waste treatment plant since the raid. All the defendants denied criminal damage.

## Britain tries to delay animal test ban

BY NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN is expected to force a compromise today over proposals to ban cosmetics that have been tested on animals.

Under plans agreed by the European Commission and parliament in June, new creams, toothpastes and other similar products that have been tested on animals will be outlawed in 1988.

To get agreement among member states, Britain, which has the EC presidency, is expected to support the ban provided that alternative forms of testing can be found. When ministers vote in Brussels, Britain will propose delaying the ban pending the results of a study.

Dr Tony Suckling, the RSPCA's director of scientific affairs, said he feared that the study would be biased in favour of industry, ruining the chances of the ban coming into force.

Baroness Denton of Wakefield, the junior minister for consumer affairs, is expected to recommend that the study

be done by the Committee for the Adaptation to Technical Progress, made up of representatives of member states. Dr Suckling said: "They are advised by a committee of experts on cosmetics matters, many of whom are drawn from industry. We have important reservations about their impartiality."

The RSPCA and other groups argue that developments in computing, tissue cultures and other scientific alternatives have advanced to the point where many animal tests, such as those for eye and skin irritation, are now unnecessary. They say that products needing tests in which there is no alternative to animals, such as allergy tests, should not be developed until alternatives are found.

"From the weight of public opinion it would seem that people would prefer to not have new products if it means continuing animal testing," Dr Suckling said.

In Britain last year, cosmet-

ics-related experiments were carried out on 3,082 animals — mainly mice, rats and guinea pigs, the latest Home Office figures show. The level has declined sharply since 1987 when over 12,000 experiments were carried out.

Animal welfare groups believe that banning the testing of cosmetics on animals will have wider implications, putting pressure on drug and chemical companies to find alternatives to animal tests more quickly.

Last year, the number of animal experiments rose for the first time in 15 years, to 3,242,449. Some of the increase was due to more research on bovine spongiform encephalopathy, the mad-cow disease, and experiments in which genetically modified animals were bred for research into medicinal proteins and inherited disease.

Groups such as the Fund Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments (Frame) are concerned that there has

also been a rise in some areas of toxicity testing, including testing on chemicals and household products. Julia Penten, of Frame, said: "Toxicity testing uses large numbers of animals... just because they are available and have been used historically." She said that developments were emerging which, with the support of industry, could cut the 500,000-plus animals used.

One such development being researched at Leeds University is a computer programme that will identify potentially hazardous drugs before they reach the animal testing stage.

Barbara Davies of the Research Defence Society in London said that such techniques would cut the number of animal experiments only slightly in the short term. "You can use computers and tissue cultures as an initial screen but ultimately... there is no substitute for a whole living animal," she said.

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## Aristocrats fight to limit sale of leases under housing bill

By Rachel Kelly, Property Correspondent

THE country's most powerful landlords, including the Duke of Westminster and the Earl of Cadogan, are fighting to limit proposals to allow leaseholders to gain their freehold in the housing and urban development bill which has its second reading today.

Up to 750,000 long-leaseholders of flats would gain the right to buy their freehold from the landlords if the bill becomes law. The aristocratic estates would not suffer financially in the short-term, as leaseholders would have to pay a market price for their freeholds, but they do stand to

lose income over the long-term. While leaseholders argue that the bill does not go far enough, freeholders such as the Cadogan estate and the Grosvenor estate and the Leasehold Enfranchisement Association, said: "We've been quite shocked by their tactics. These lobbyists are high-powered professionals, working in the greatest secrecy, paid to pick off MPs one by one. We are up against the most invidious power."

Organisations such as the Leasehold Enfranchisement Association and the Commonhold Flats Campaign are unpaid and run by householders combining their work with their campaign for leasehold reform. Ms South said:

A spokeswoman for the Grosvenor estate said the estate had retained lobbyists only for the past couple of months and their use had been played up a lot. Leaseholders have also been hoping for amendments at committee stage, to close loopholes that they say will stop thousands of long-leaseholders from gaining their freeholds if landlords manipulate leases to prevent them from buying the freehold of their block. The low ground rent rule states that leases must be for over 20 years and a low ground rent must apply. That is defined as being less than two-thirds of the rateable value at the time the lease was granted, or £1,000 in London and £250 elsewhere if it was granted after April, 1990.

At least 90 per cent of the block must be residential, 67 per cent of all the flats must be eligible and 67 per cent of owners eligible must want to buy. It would be possible for landlords to frustrate the legislation, says Ms South. In a block of ten flats, for instance, landlords would need to ensure that only four flats did not qualify. "They can do this by repurchasing flats and granting long leases where the ground rent is over the eligibility level," Ms South said.

## Heritage appeals for Stonehenge sponsor

By John Young

ENGLISH Heritage is to seek commercial partners to help to fund the preservation and public display of some of Britain's most famous historic buildings and ancient monuments.

The move follows a plan published last week which envisages the transfer of up to 200 properties in English Heritage's care to private or local authority management. Among the projects for which commercial sponsorship will be sought is a £10 million scheme for improving the approaches to Stonehenge, including the closure of the road which runs past the site and the provision of a new visitor centre.

The scheme, promoted jointly by English Heritage and the National Trust, goes to a public enquiry early next year after opposition from Salisbury District Council.

The first such partnership is already in place in the cliffs below Dover Castle where British Telecom has paid for the recreation of the wartime

telephone exchange, known as Hellfire Corner.

Roy Swanson, English Heritage's director of properties in care, said that other suitable candidates included Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, Kenwood in northwest London, Audley End, Essex, Lindisfarne Priory, Northumberland, Carlisle Castle in Cumbria and Pendennis Castle, Cornwall.

Jennifer Page, English Heritage's chief executive, said that much unnecessary alarm had been spread by suggestions that it planned not only to sell the family silver but to dispose of the vaults as well. There was no question of selling outstanding properties that were owned or in the care of the nation.

But there were many small and fairly obscure buildings and monuments which were of no great national interest and which would be more appropriately looked after by local authorities or trusts, she added.



Body beautiful: the millionaire model Cindy Crawford, 26, who launched her fitness video in London yesterday, says she is considering an acting career

## Colonel's widow attacks Civvies

THE widow of Colonel H Jones, commander of 2 Para during the Falklands war, yesterday criticised BBC television's *Civvies* programme as being "a fairy story completely removed from reality".

Sara Jones, speaking in Southampton at the launch of the Royal British Legion's poppy appeal, said she wanted

to send a message of support to servicemen who would be leaving the services under the government's *Options for Change* programme. "I would appeal to future employers to take *Civvies* with a pinch of salt," she said.

"The people you see on your television screens bear little relationship at all with the

people I have known and respected. I suggest you treat the programme as a fairy story completely removed from reality."

Mrs Jones added: "I appeal to employers to look on our ex-service people and see in them the opportunity for the loyal, dedicated, hard-working men and women that they are."

## Jail terms trebled on death crash drivers

Two motorists involved in a high-speed death crash after antagonising each other with aggressive driving had their jail sentences trebled by the Court of Appeal yesterday. Garry Godden, 23, of Ashford, Kent, and Steven Boosey, 21, of Laindon, Essex, drove at up to 70mph along a 40mph dual carriageway on the A28 Canterbury Road near Westgate on Sea, Kent, Lord Taylor of Gosforth, the Lord Chief Justice, said.

Boosey lost control of his car trying to overtake Godden's vehicle. It ended up in the opposite carriageway and Boosey's passenger was killed. Godden, who denied causing death by reckless driving, was jailed for six months on September 4, and Boosey, who pleaded guilty to the offence, was jailed for four months. The sentences were increased yesterday to 18 months and 12 months.

## Rushdie bounty upped

The bounty offered for the life of Salman Rushdie has been increased to more than \$2 million (£1.3 million), according to a Tehran newspaper. *Jomhoori Islami* reported that the private Foundation of 15th Khordad had increased the reward after a visit that the novelist paid to Germany last week when he urged the Bonn government to use its economic might to pressure Iran into lifting the *fatwa*. The move will strain relations with London further after a series of tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats in the summer.

## Parents accuse MoD

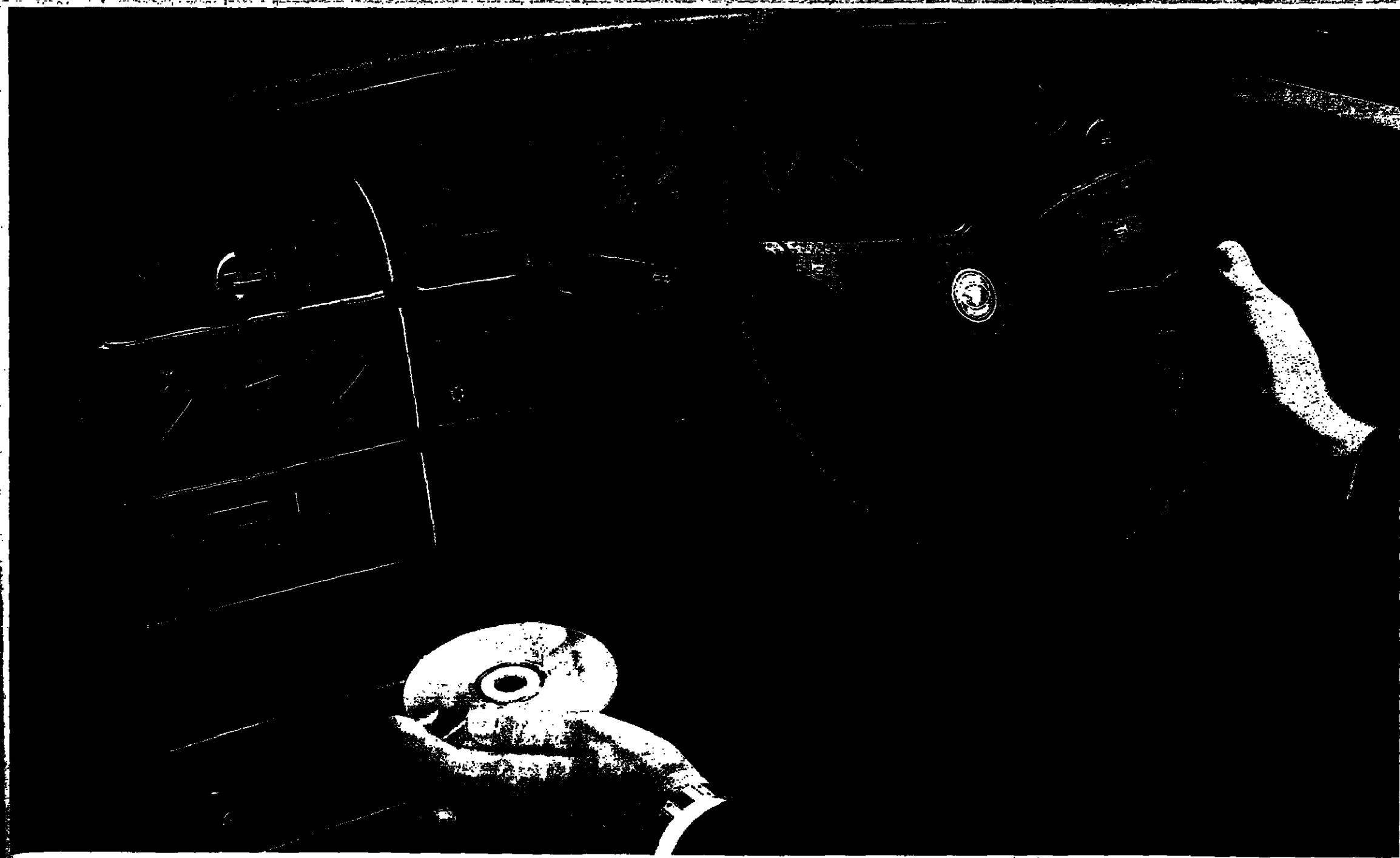
The parents of a teenage Royal Marine who died after a pub party where recruits celebrated winning their green berets are claiming compensation from the Ministry of Defence. Ian Mallard, 17, died of acute alcohol poisoning and inhaling his own vomit. Malcolm and Susan Mallard, from Chester, claim the ministry did not look after him properly. The results of a military investigation have been sent to the ministry, said Colonel Mike Taffinder, of the Commando Training Centre, Lympstone, Devon, where Ian trained.

## Prince backs fund

The Prince of Wales is supporting an appeal to raise £1 million to buy food, medicine, clothing and shelter for the victims of President Saddam Hussein's regime in southeast Iraq. In the foreword of a book published yesterday to launch the Amar appeal for the marshland people, he said: "The lives of over half a million people, victims of an inhuman policy of cultural genocide, are at risk." The appeal is named after a boy aged 10, orphaned by bombing in the marshlands, who had plastic surgery at Guy's Hospital.

## Briton pleads guilty

A British man pleaded guilty in a Thai court on Monday to charges of heroin trafficking, saying he had given up hope of proving he was set up by drug smugglers. "The heroin was in my possession and I cannot prove that it was not mine," said Peter Heather, 26, from Stoke-on-Trent, who was arrested in Bangkok on January 25 in possession of a package containing 14oz of heroin. He faces a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison under Thailand's strict anti-drug laws. He is due to be sentenced on Thursday.



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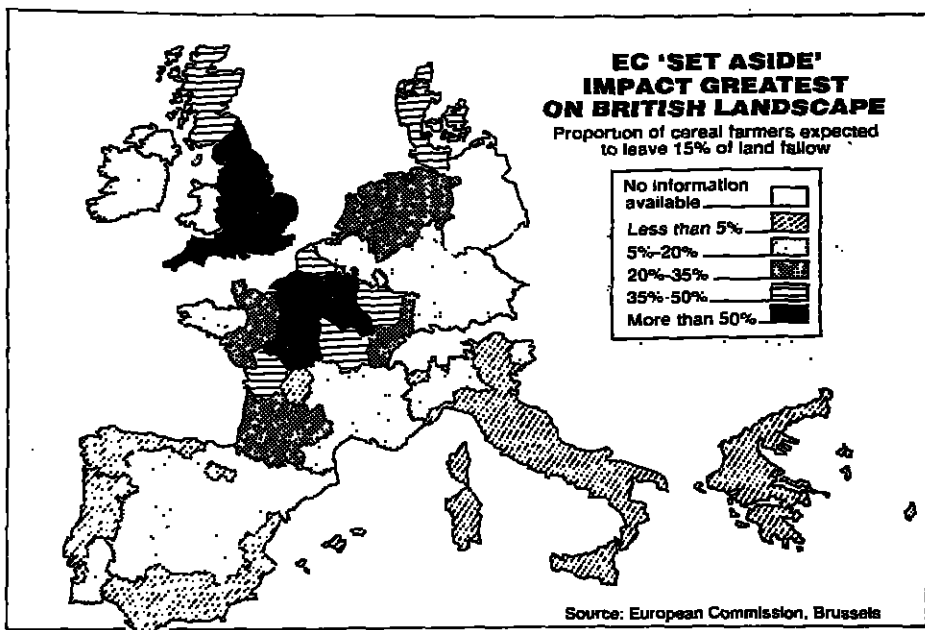
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مركز الناصر



# EC farming reforms will give Britain an abrupt change of scenery



By MICHAEL HORNBY  
AGRICULTURE  
CORRESPONDENT

THE British countryside is about to undergo the biggest and most abrupt change since the second world war when millions of acres of grassland, parks and golf courses were ploughed up to boost supplies of home-grown food.

Great chunks of British farmland, together equal to about a third of the size of Wales, are expected to lie fallow over the next three years under the set-aside provisions of the reform of the European Community's common agricultural policy agreed in May.

Under the scheme, intended to shrink the EC's 30 million tonne mountain of surplus grain, British farmers will be eligible for grants of up to £88 an acre if they grow no crops on 15 per cent of their land.

■ Britain's contribution to reducing the EC's grain mountain is expected to surpass that of any other state and cost taxpayers £130 million next year

The impact will be bigger in Britain than anywhere else in the Community, according to an assessment by the European Commission in Brussels.

About 49,000 — or 54 per cent — of Britain's 90,000 cereal farmers are expected to apply for the set-aside grants, compared with no more than 11 per cent of grain growers in the EC as a whole. Only in the cereal-growing plains of central and northern France will the impact be comparable.

Britain, though containing barely a tenth of the cereal acreage in the EC, will account for 1.58 million — nearly one

out of every five — of the 8.27 million acres that farmers in the Community are expected to leave fallow.

Brussels estimates that 16.5 per cent of cereal land in the UK will come out of production, the biggest proportion in the Community. The EC average is put at 9.4 per cent. Yet Britain accounted for only 0.5 per cent of the 10 million tonne increase last year in the EC's cereal crop.

Greece, responsible for a third of the increase, is expected to set aside only 1.8 per cent of its cereal acreage, and Portugal, which contributed a

quarter of the rise, no more than 3.9 per cent.

Peter Johnson, chief executive of Booker Countrywide, which manages 45,000 acres of farmland in southern and eastern England, said: "It's a bloody joke. The countries which will be setting aside least are precisely the ones who are expanding their acreage, those well known world competitive cereal producers of Greece and Portugal."

The reason for this is that farmers producing less than 92 tonnes are exempt from set-aside requirements and Britain has the smallest proportion falling below that threshold. So British farming will be penalised for being better structured than that of other Community members.

For farmers above the threshold, set-aside is compulsory if they want compensation payments for the 29 per

cent cut in their guaranteed prices that is being phased in over three years as part of the reform. Few if any are expected to find it more profitable to keep all land in production and forgo the compensation.

The environmental benefits of set-aside, which is expected to cost the taxpayer more than £130 million in Britain next year, are questionable. Set-aside land will have to be rotated round the farm, to prevent farmers keeping only their least productive acres idle, and so will be useless for long-term landscape improvement such as tree planting.

Rotational fallow could have provided a new habitat for birds that build their nests in stubble or rough grass in the early summer, but farmers will be allowed to start cultivating fallow land as early as May 1 in preparation for replanting in the autumn.

## IRA shooting spree raises fear of Belfast gang war

By EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE MP for West Belfast said yesterday that his constituency could see an explosion of inter-factional republican violence after an onslaught by the IRA on a rival group at the weekend.

Joe Hendron, who took the seat for the SDLP from Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, at the last election, said that rivalry between the small Irish People's Liberation Organisation (IPLO) and the IRA had the potential to become much worse.

"You have to remember with the IPLO, they know who the Provos are and they know who the senior Sinn Féin people are. A lot of people would be frightened," Dr Hendron said.

His comments follow extraordinary events when IRA gunmen launched a series of attacks against members of the IPLO, starting with the shooting dead of Sammy

Ward, one of the organisation's top Belfast figures, on Saturday evening. His death at a bar in a nationalist enclave in East Belfast was followed by up to nine other weekend shootings, all carried out by IRA gunmen. At least six of the attacks were so-called kneecappings or punishment shootings and two were attempted murders.

The IRA claimed in a statement that it was not trying to initiate a new feud with the IPLO, but was intent on rooting out drug dealers. "A year ago the IRA warned those responsible for corrupting our youth with drugs to stop or they would face the consequences," the statement said. "Since then the IRA has been assimilating intelligence. Yesterday's attacks were part of the ongoing operation against those people acting with agencies outside the nationalist community, includ-

ing Loyalists and the RUC, for counter-insurgency purposes."

There can be little doubt that the Provisionals are committed to ridding West Belfast of a menacing drug problem in their self-appointed role as an alternative police force, the shootings also underlined the long-running rivalry between the two groups.

The IPLO is a small fanatical group formed in 1987 when it split from the even more ruthless Irish National People's Liberation Army, which murdered Airey Neave in a car bombing at Westminster in March 1979.

The IPLO's activities in the republican cause have been obscure and intermittent, carrying out occasional murders of Protestants and attempts on the security forces. In recent months, the organisation has split into two warring factions at a cost of at least three dead after the murder of one of its

top figures in Belfast in August.

The IRA and Sinn Féin have consistently called on the IPLO to disband, accusing it of being little more than a group of criminals more interested in drug dealing than in furthering the republican cause. In December last year Sean McKnight, a Belfast Sinn Féin councillor, summed up the views of mainstream republicans when he dismissed the group as "corrupt and apolitical".

The decision by the IRA to go on the defensive is a risky one which could lead to significant loss of life within its own ranks at the hands of a gang of fanatics who have already made clear they have no intention of giving in to Provisional pressure.

The strategy owes much to the IRA and Sinn Féin's determination to demonstrate to its supporters that it has the authority to run republican areas of Belfast and to crack down on "anti-social elements", such as those involved in drug dealing, joyriding and petty theft.

"They are taking action because they believe it will enhance their standing within the community," Dr Hendron said. "I do accept that there is a certain amount of support for this kind of thing, just as there was when they took action against joyriders."

Dr Hendron said it would be easy to be cynical about the prospect of a feud — as many police and soldiers would admit to being privately — and let the gunmen on both sides get on with killing each other, but he added: "I cannot take that line. The people here want the provisionals off their backs."



New direction: Hilary Williams, the British Gas executive who won a sex discrimination case against the company last March, has left the job to which she was reinstated and has become chief executive of the Girl Guides (Robin Young writes).

Ms Williams, above, was expected to become the first woman director of British Gas until she was demoted from her £45,000-a-year job as southwest regional marketing manager. Yesterday

she spent her first day at the Guides' central headquarters in central London and declined to be interviewed.

Ms Williams, a psychology graduate and master of business administration, turned a £750,000 loss in British Gas's customer services department into a £750,000 profit and became the highest ranking woman in the company, but after privatisation she was ordered to move back to a job she had held eight years previously, Tony Roddis, regional

director of marketing, told her: "Thank God you have taken it like a man, even though you are the wrong shape." An industrial tribunal later found British Gas guilty of discrimination and awarded Ms Williams her costs, £8,000 damages and her job back.

The Girl Guides Association said yesterday: "You can take it that our chief executive is paid comfortably more than the £45,000 Ms Williams was getting from British Gas."

"STARTING today," ran yesterday's *Daily Mail* front-page slogan, "the book James Herriot vowed he'd never write."

In the early 1970s there was a vogue for books bearing the legend "This book will change your life" emblazoned on their covers. These ranged from Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying* to Luke Reinhardt's *The Dice Man*, taking in a multitude of jogging and other books. It seemed unlikely that any of them really would have changed a reader's life, although the addition of the phrase "for the worse" might have lent a small measure of truth to their claims.

By the mid-eighties, "This book will change your life!"

The way it isn't

CRAIG BROWN



had been superseded by "The book they tried to ban!", which was applied to everything from *Synagogue* to unauthorised biographies of Princess Michael of Kent.

But a book to change your life and a book they tried to ban are both infinitely more alluring than a book its author "vowed he'd never write". I can think of a

number of books which, I feel sure, their authors vowed they would never write. *The Wit and Wisdom of Prince Philip: Gossip: The Authorised Biography of Paul Gascoigne* and vast quantities of books offering new clues to the identity of Jack the Ripper spring to mind.

Personally, I have vowed never to write books about lovable muggies, diet plans, my travels in Congo or the Queen Mother.

It was noble of Herriot to make his vow never to write another book about vets. None of us should blame him too harshly for failing to keep to it. But is this failure really something worth boasting about?

## Synod vote will split the church

By RUTH GLEDHILL  
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Church of England will be unable to continue in its present form if it votes against the ordination of women priests, according to a report published today. The decisive synod vote, expected to succeed or fail by a handful, is a week tomorrow.

Much attention has centred on those who will leave the church if it does ordain women priests. But after November, a report of in-depth discussions by women deacons in the Ely diocese, makes clear that the damage could be as serious if the vote fails. Illegal ordinations of women priests and other protest actions could split the church.

The report says that some women are already acting as "common law priests" — women who feel they have been called to the priesthood and who celebrate holy communion in private or informal settings.

Of 22 women who met between July and September this year, three said they would be unable to accept a decision against women priests. Six said they would consider giving up their ordained ministry and choose another career. Two said they might leave the church.

Six would consider protest action, such as seeking illegal ordination to the priesthood. Some bishops abroad have already indicated they would be prepared to ordain English women if the vote fails in November, the report says. Others were unsure what action they would take. All supported the ordination of women priests.

## Companies seek top billing in arts sponsorship deals

By ALISON ROBERTS, ARTS REPORTER

BUSINESSES are rejecting philanthropy for publicity deals as arts sponsorship budgets are decided for 1993. Arts groups are being forced to be more aggressive in pursuit of corporate support and those that secure sponsorship are having to negotiate contracts which give more prominent publicity to businesses.

Duncan Burns, the arts sponsorship manager for Midland Bank, said the sponsorship climate had changed. "Sponsors and potential sponsors are much more anxious to drive a hard bargain." On leaflets, posters and programmes corporate logos are displayed more prominently.

"We would look at things

like the target market — what sort of market exposure there is for us and what potential there is for client entertainment." The bank expects its logo to be featured on publicity material and will not enter into joint sponsorship because this dilutes the potential for exposure, he said.

Antoinette Moses, the marketing manager of the Norfolk and Norwich festival, spent much time persuading companies that sponsorship was a form of marketing which often worked out cheaper than other advertising campaigns.

"This is not the time for the chairman's wife's whim; it's not a form of altruism. I try to imagine their marketing needs and it is up to me to sell

it to them," she said.

National companies, with the exception of the Royal Opera House, are maintaining their business funding, but smaller, regional arts organisations are less secure about sponsorship. Large sponsors of the arts, such as Lloyds and the Midland, have frozen their sponsorship budgets, and British Petroleum has cut its support from £1.2 million in 1991 to £650,000 in 1993. Smaller local businesses may cut sponsorship altogether.

BP is not renewing sponsorship contracts and full-time posts in the company's sponsorship office have been lost. Jeremy Nicholls, the arts sponsorship manager, said: "The company could not maintain its sponsorship programme. In a philistine world you ask a hard-headed businessman for a good reason why he should be sponsoring a poetry competition. If times are good he will say because poetry is good, but in bad times the changes."

Jerry O'Keefe, of Merseyside Arts, said that regional organisations which attracted smaller audiences were finding it much harder to find sponsorship and that bigger festivals were having to be "much more strategic in what they will give in exchange."

Companies are creditors, not patrons, said Paul Blackman, of the Battersea Arts Centre in London. "The arts have learnt to work more economically and effectively as a business. If you have a good product that you are proud of then you should be able to market it: the arts are no longer sacrosanct in that respect."

## Bank account blunders feed new breed of watchdog

By TONY DAVE

THE high street banks make so many mistakes on customers' accounts that a small group of customers are earning a living from checking bank statements.

One of them claimed yesterday to have won customers £500,000 in refunds so far this year. The banks insist that over-charging is on a small scale and seldom exceeds £50, but as much as £75,000 has been repaid to one businessman.

The success of the account-checking companies underlines the growing discontent with Britain's major banks, which was revealed by a report in *The Times* yesterday that scores of customers are planning to sue for breach of contract, libel and even fraud.

The errors include charging customers a higher than agreed interest rate on their overdrafts and failing to notify them when overdrafts are due for renewal and then imposing an unauthorised borrowing rate which can be as high as 35 per cent.

Other mistakes are caused by computer operators who might deduct the same payment twice and by the failure to clear cheques in the agreed time.

David Gold started BankCalc Systems of Stanmore, west London, a year ago after encountering problems on his own business statements. "I paid someone a lot of money to make up a computer program and initially I found I had been overcharged £1,000. Eventually I got back £74,000 on all my accounts," Mr Gold said.

From then on, BankCalc became his full-time business and he claims to have recov-

■ In the wake of plans for mass legal action against lenders, small businesses are turning to financial troubleshooters to help recover thousands of pounds

ered £500,000 from the banks for his business clients. He charges them £125 for analysing a year's statements and then 10 per cent of any refund obtained if the client wants him to pursue the case with the bank.

Graham Bolderson set up BankChek last year after he went through his own company's bank statements and found he had been paying far too much for his overdraft.

"I spotted a pretty horrific error and set out to prove it," he said. "I developed some specialist software and then tested it on friends' companies' accounts. I found some of them had been overcharged, too."

"Commercial bells started ringing when one friend sent my report to his branch of the National Westminster and was credited within 36 working hours with £4,500 for the error."

Michael Whyke of Clarkson Hyde Accountants of Sutton, south London, bought a BankChek computer program to use on his clients' accounts. "I tried it out with our own bank statements to see how easy it was to use," he said.

"I did not expect problems but a £1,500 overcharge turned up. Although we had an agreement with the bank that if we gave two weeks' notice before exceeding our agreed overdraft limit we would not be charged extra, I found that we had been charged excess rates of 30 per

cent. We were highly delighted to get the money back."

John Newson, managing director of Triadcolour TV Service of Mitcham, south London, examined bank statements going back 18 months because the interest payments seemed alarmingly high. After some argument, Lloyds Bank refunded him £5,657.

A survey by BankChek found that of 116 companies which had used their program, 64 had been overcharged.

Pat Griffiths, who set up the Bank Action Group earlier this year after difficulties with Lloyds, has received a total of £14,600 in a series of refunds for overcharged interest and has even received an offer from the bank of compensation for her time in checking her accounts.

Mr Gold said: "Some bank managers put their hands up straight away while others try to bamboozle you with jargon and one has even told me recently that I will have to sue to get my client's money back."

A spokesman for Lloyds Bank said: "There is no need for any bank customer to buy an expensive piece of software to see if he has been overcharged. He should apply for a list of the interest rates charged on his accounts and check whether they have been applied correctly."

"If he finds mistakes have been made, he should then contact the bank who will sort it out for him."

## Fischer left in limbo by 14th draw

By RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

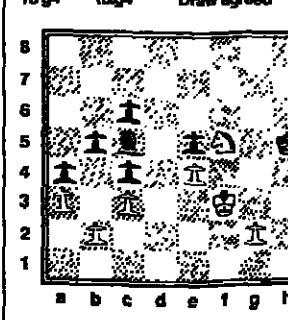
BOBBY Fischer is struggling to gain his final win against Boris Spassky in their self-styled world chess championship in Belgrade. Fischer needs one more success to clinch the world record \$3.35 million winner's purse.

In game 28 on Sunday, despite choosing the complicated King's Indian Defence, normally an opening rich in possibilities for both sides, Fischer could not avoid a fourteenth draw, this time on the 35th move. He never held an advantage, despite a variation with black on move ten.

Fischer leads by nine wins to five. Game 29 is scheduled for tomorrow.

Game 28

White	Black	White	Black
1 d4	Nf6	19 b3	Nc7
2 d4	g6	20 g4	Nc5
3 Nf3	Bg7	21 Bf1	Bd7
4 e4	d6	22 Rf1	Bd7
5 Bc4	0-0	23 Qc1	Rb7
6 Bxd3	Nd5	24 Qd2	Rb8
7 Nxe2	Nb6	25 Rf2	Rb8
8 f4	h5	26 Rg2	Bd7
9 Nc1	g5	27 Rg3	Bd7
10 d5	Nd4	28 Bf1	Bd7
11 Bb3	Nb3	29 Bf1	Bd7
12 Qc2	Kf7	30 Bf1	Bd7
13 Bc2	Bd8	31 Rf2	0-0
14 Bb3	Kg6	32 Rf2	0-0
15 0-0-0	Kg7	33 Kd2	0-0
16 Kd1	Bd7	34 Kd2	0-0
17 Rf1	Rb8	35 Bf1	0-0
18 g4	h4		Draw agreed

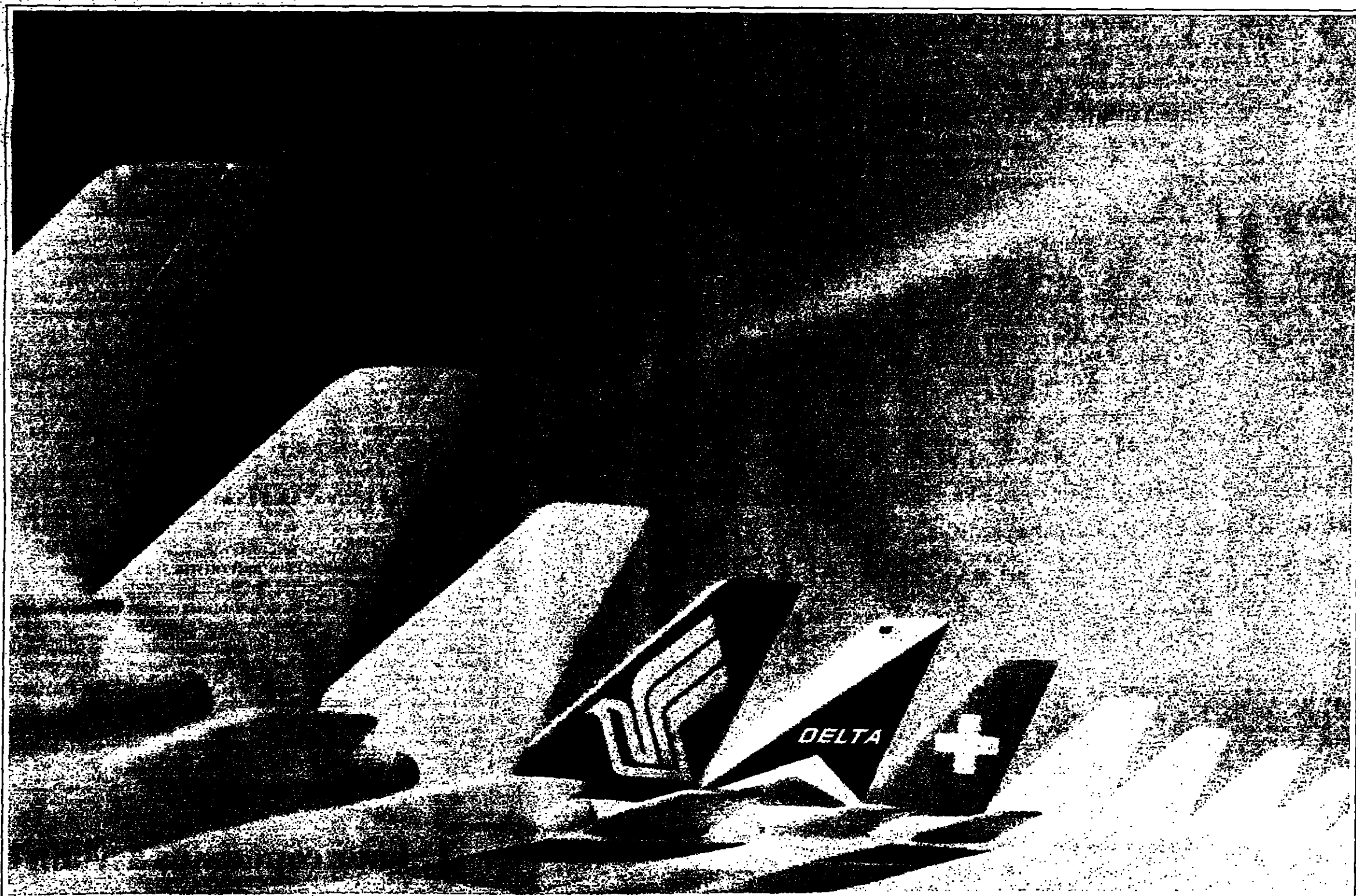




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# Ministers battle to avoid public spending squeeze

By Jill Sherman, Political Correspondent

**A marathon cabinet meeting was facing the "painful choices" demanded by the government's spending targets**

CABINET ministers were locked in battle over spending last night as Downing Street made it clear that there was no question of the £244.5 billion target being breached.

The marathon meeting, which was expected to go on for several hours, was set up last week after ministers expressed their anger at the cuts proposed by the special spending committee, chaired by Norman Lamont.

The hardest hit departments are said to be defence, health, social security and environment. Michael Howard, the environment secretary, was last night arguing for extra money on transitional funding for the council tax, while Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, is resisting plans for benefit cuts.

Virginia Bottomley, the health secretary, is pressing for extra cash to build up family doctor services in London in preparation for the closure of surplus hospitals.

In spite of the prime minister's pledge to safeguard capital projects and the relaxation of Treasury rules to ease private sector investment, it is likely that some programmes to build roads, hospitals and schools will be hit.

Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, predicted a meeting of hard bargaining, insisting that "painful choices" had to be made. He insisted, however, that the ceiling would be met, and that public borrowing would not be able to run out of control.

With some ministers calling

for tax increases and others a relaxation of public sector borrowing to fund new developments, Downing Street officials emphasised last night that no option was being considered that would breach the £244.5 billion ceiling.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *World at One*, Mr Clarke said that it was likely to take quite a few meetings to reach agreement over spending decisions. However, he left the door ajar for increases in national insurance contributions and a temporary increase in higher rates of tax. While the government did not favour tax increases,



Clarke: borrowing will not run out of control

no Treasury minister would ever rule it out completely, he said.

Mr Clarke, a member of the EDX committee which compiled the list of cuts, said that every department would have to share the cuts, and restraints would have to be applied in some areas, even where the total increased as a whole. "The government has got to look at every department."

It is understood that cabinet ministers are divided on how far to protect capital projects at the risk of penalising low-income groups, through benefit cuts. It is now expected that some benefits, including invalidity benefit and possibly child benefit, will be raised by less than the rate of inflation. Restrictions on housing benefit are expected to be introduced, together with less-than-inflation rises for lone parent benefit and family credit.

Officials yesterday gave little away about John Major's recovery package, which is to go with the Autumn Statement. The package is expected to include changes to Treasury rules to ease private sector investment in public spending projects and a boost for the housing market.

The release of council house capital receipts to increase local authority spending on

new homes is being firmly resisted by the Treasury, although it is said that there could be a small "gesture" in this direction.

As Conservative backbenchers started a rearguard action against cuts in the budgets for health, transitional funding for the council tax and training, Mr Clarke pointed out that every cabinet minister had signed up to the new system of setting public spending.

Sir Rhodes Boyson, the MP for Brent North, said that failing to protect the implementation of the council tax would cause a big backlash in the South of England. If there were no new funds, money could be switched from standard spending assessments in the North to the South to cushion the impact, he said. "We cannot expect people in the South to pay higher bills than they do now."

Jerry Hayes, the MP for Harlow, said that the health service reforms should not be jeopardised by cuts on health. The Labour MP Greville Janner, chairman of the all-party Commons employment select committee, said that any suggestion that training funds, already too low, would be cut back would be "horrendous".

Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, said that Labour would be mounting a nationwide campaign to prevent public spending cuts. The cabinet was engulfed in "crisis, chaos and bitter internal warfare," he said.



Spin doctor: Neil Kinnock gives a new twist to his career, at the microphone in Radio 2's Jimmy Young studio yesterday

## Kinnock turns the tables

By Robin Young

BEATEN to the post in April, Neil Kinnock yesterday got his consolation prize — a week of presenting *The Jimmy Young Show* on BBC Radio 2.

As everyone knows who listens regularly to the "jolly old prog", as its sprightly regular presenter calls it, this is the light and easy-listening radio entertainment which Margaret Thatcher and her ministers promoted to be the principal national forum for political debate.

Mr Kinnock did his best yesterday to maintain the high standard set by the former pop singer turned king of the DPs whom he is temporarily replacing.

The former Labour leader has never presented a radio show before, and it sounded a bit like that. Despite a practice run sitting in with Young, he overran the time signal pips at 1pm, blathering on about fishermen's hairnets.

Mr Kinnock's interviews included a newsmaking one with Sir Leon Brittan, the British European Commissioner, who said that doubts over Maastricht were already adversely affecting the economy by putting the brakes on inward investment. There were also worthy discussions about treatment for infertility on the NHS, complaints against the clearing banks, and the problems of carers.

Radio Neil will be back on the air today. The next two weeks are to be handled by Lord Archer and the Lib Dem president, Charles Kennedy.

## How extra cash turned into 'cut'

By Anatole Kaletsky, Economics Editor

ECONOMICS VIEW

WHEN ministers warn of "intolerable" cuts in public spending, they are actually talking about increasing government spending by £17.9 billion, or 7.9 per cent. In fact, whenever the Chancellor talks about cutting public spending he actually means to increase it.

For anyone who has followed the Whitehall farce of government economic policy in the past few months, this contradiction should come as no surprise. Yet ministers, financial analysts and Treasury officials are strangely bemused when asked why one of the biggest real increases in public spending on record suddenly feels like a draconian squeeze.

The crucial figures are simple. In last year's Autumn Statement, Norman Lamont announced plans to spend £226.6 billion in 1992-3 and £244.5 billion in 1993-4. The £244.5 billion, known as next year's planning total, has now become the magic number which the Chancellor is determined to abide by, regardless of political cost. But why should the political costs be so daunting?

Not only is the new planning total 7.9 per cent higher than the last one in money terms, it actually represents an even bigger increase in real terms than the government had expected because inflation has turned out to be lower than the Treasury had assumed. Last year, the Treasury assumed 4 per cent inflation in the year to the fourth quarter of 1992, resulting in a planned real increase of 3.9 per cent. In fact inflation has now fallen to 3.6 per cent, so that the same cash planning total amounts to a real increase of 4.3 per cent.

Why, then, the outcry over a 4.5 per cent real increase in public spending? The growth of unemployment has pre-

empted part of the planned increase in spending, but is insufficient to explain the apparent intensity of cabinet anguish this week. The Treasury assumed that unemployment in the next financial year would average 2.4 million. In fact the jobless total is 2.9 million and still rising. If unemployment averaged 3.2 million in 1993-4, the 800,000 additional jobless would add £2.6 billion to public spending. This is a large amount, but it is still only 1 per cent of the planning total — less than a quarter of the real increase planned for public spending next year.

Other areas of government spending are also sensitive to recession. Disability benefits and family credit for single mothers are rising faster than expected, as are legal aid and support for students in higher education. But these programmes are far too small to have any big impact on total public spending.

In any case, the extra spending connected with unemployment could be absorbed in the £8 billion contingency reserve included in the £244.5 billion planning total for next year, if this reserve were cut to £4 billion in next week's Autumn Statement, to leave some scope for unexpected developments within the financial year.

Why, then, all the political fuss? Next year's real increase in public spending, large though it is, will be smaller than the 6.5 per cent inflation-adjusted expansion this year. But nobody believed that the government could maintain indefinitely the rapidly growing largesse announced in an election year — nobody, that is, apart from the cabinet.

## AROUND THE LOBBY

### MPs to vote again

A second ballot will be held next Wednesday to decide whether Ron Davies, Labour's agriculture spokesman, or George Robertson, shadow European minister, will take the shadow cabinet seat left empty following Bryan Gould's resignation. The result of the first election put Mr Davies in the lead with 78, Mr Robertson on 77 and the two other contenders, Tony Banks and Clare Short, well behind on 34 and 27 each. A crucial factor could be the votes of the 50 MPs who have not so far taken part in the contest.

### New peers

Sir Bernard Braine, the former Father of the House of Commons, was introduced in the Lords as Lord Braine of Wheatley. Sir Derek Barber, former chairman of the Countryside Commission, was introduced as Lord Barber of Tewkesbury.

### Science study

A white paper on science and technology is to be published in the new year. William Waldegrave, the science minister, said at question time. It will emphasise the importance of engineering, he said.

### In Parliament

Commons (2.30): Questions: employment; prime minister. Housing and urban development Bill, second reading. Lords (2.30): Criminal justice bill, second reading.

## Labour condemns asylum bill

By Arthur Leathley

THE revised government drive to curb abuses of Britain's asylum and immigration rules yesterday ran into bitter opposition in the Commons. Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, came under attack over the proposals which he said would accelerate and simplify the decision-making process in asylum cases.

The government introduced the asylum and immigration appeals bill, a modified version of the asylum bill which it tried to pass last year but which ran out of parliamentary time when the general election was called.

The bill is aimed primarily at cutting down the number of what Mr Clarke called "groundless claims" from people applying for asylum who remain in Britain for long periods while their appli-

cation is being considered. Up to six out of ten people who were refused asylum were granted exceptional leave to remain in Britain, entitling them to work and benefit permits.

The new bill introduces a rule under which rejected asylum seekers can have an oral appeal within ten days but will have to leave if that appeal is turned down. Visitors and short-term students will not have the right to legal aid for lengthy and expensive judicial appeals. The home secretary described these as "often a pointless or academic exercise".

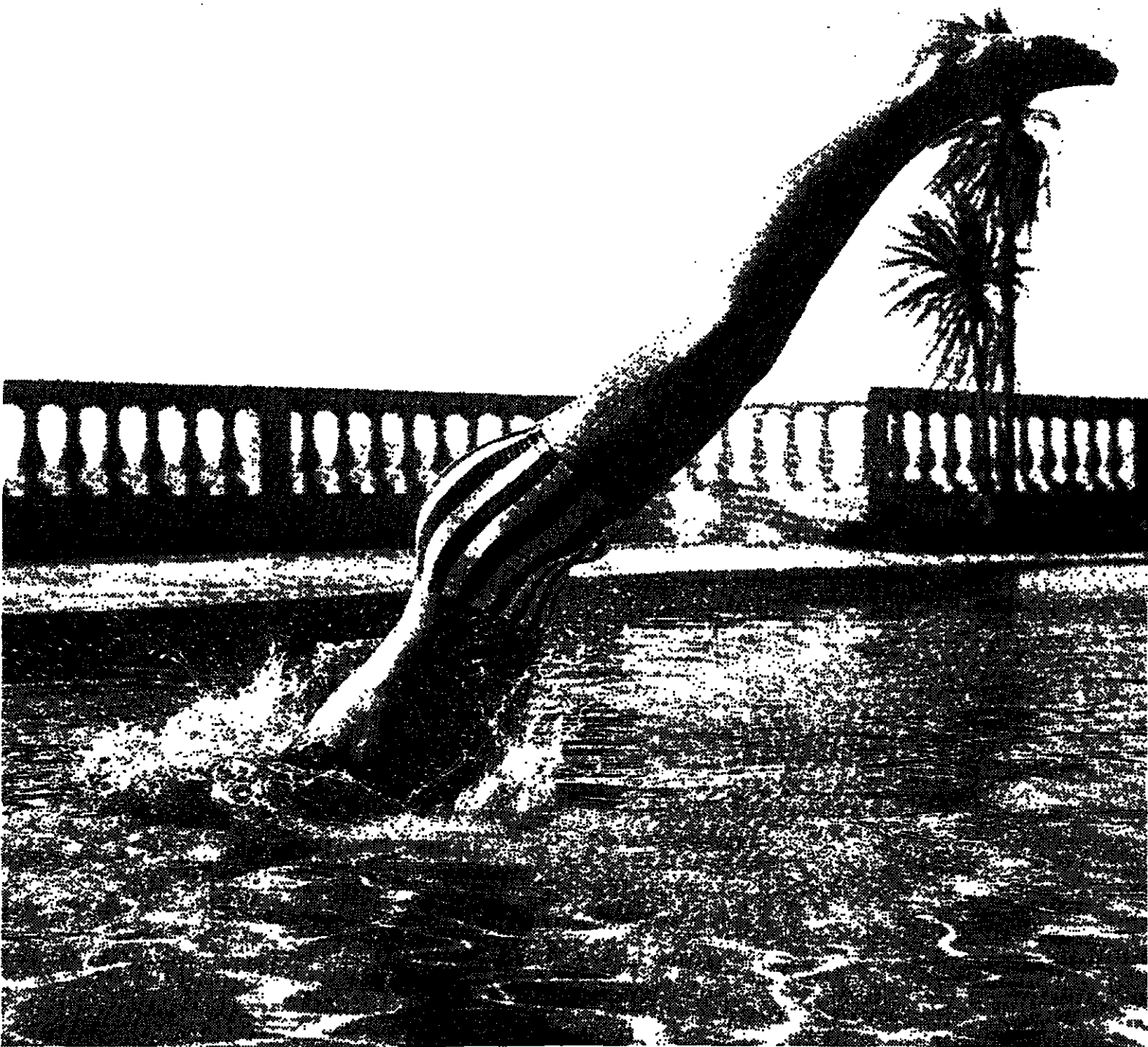
Mr Clarke clashed repeatedly with Tony Blair, the shadow home secretary, over the new 48-hour time limit for giving notice of appeal where a person was refused entry on

arrival in the UK. The home secretary said it would apply only to those where the claim was "manifestly unacceptable" but Mr Blair insisted that it would apply to all rejected cases.

Mr Clarke said that the backlog of applications for asylum now stood at 60,000 cases. Although extra staff had cleared some 20,000 cases, he said: "The need for reform is as pressing as ever."

"I believe that we must strengthen our system of controlling entry and excluding people not entitled to be here. Good race relations, in my opinion, are heavily dependent on strict immigration control. We must say 'no' more finally in the cases where there is no real scope for argument and 'yes' more quickly when 'yes' is the right answer."

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# Kinnock turns the tables

By Robin Turner

BEATEN in the poll by the Tories, Mr Kinnock yesterday presented the opposition to the Young Shink on the left. At the same time, he told everyone that he did not intend to be a regular presenter on the radio and television. Margaret Thatcher, however, promised the principal national newspaper a debate.

Mr Kinnock did not yesterday say whether he would stand for a further period of time at the 1992 election. The Labour Party has been expected to show better and it was the first time the party had been in the lead in the opinion polls.

Mr Kinnock said he had a "strong feeling" that the Labour Party should be in government. He said he was "not a politician" and that he was "not a politician" and that he was "not a politician".

## MPs to vote again

MPs to vote again. The House of Commons will vote on the new Bill for the first time. The Bill is the first of a series of Bills to be introduced by the Government. The Bill is the first of a series of Bills to be introduced by the Government.

## New peers

New peers. The House of Lords will vote on the new Bill for the first time. The Bill is the first of a series of Bills to be introduced by the Government. The Bill is the first of a series of Bills to be introduced by the Government.

## Science

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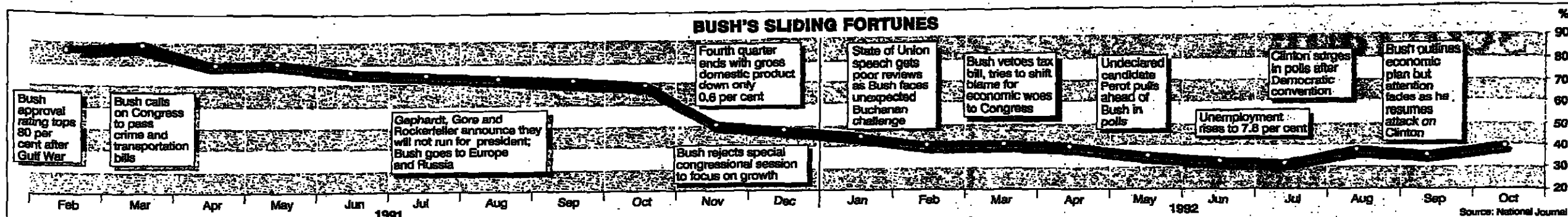
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## The Connecticut patrician was content to preside and rule

BY MARTIN FLETCHER AND JAMIE DETTMER

WITH "character and trust" as his battle cry, President Bush has made a fighting comeback in the final days of the election campaign. None the less, the single overwhelming question of this election is how a man who 20 months ago was the most popular president since polling started has come so perilously close to defeat.

The answer lies less in Mr Bush's hapless 1992 campaign than in his campaign of 1988. Then, as now, Mr Bush offered no compelling vision of America's future. As Ronald Reagan's vice-president, he simply offered more of the same and destroyed Michael Dukakis with a campaign so ugly that his manager, Lee

Atwater, later apologised for it before he died.

The morning after that election a reporter asked Mr Bush to describe his mandate. "Well, I don't know whether I want to use the word 'mandate,'" he said. "I would simply say the people have spoken." Of his meagre election platform he said, on the eve of his inauguration: "That's history. That doesn't mean anything any more."

Thus began four years in which, with the notable exceptions of Operation Desert Storm and the North American Free Trade Agreement, this Connecticut patrician has for the most part seemed content simply to preside. It was as if reaching the White

**George Bush might squeak home. But his record has been one of setbacks, missed opportunities and a slide in popularity since the heady days of the Gulf war**

House was his ultimate ambition, not using the office to change the nation for the better.

Mr Bush has certainly not created the 15 million jobs he said he would. His "kinder, gentler" America culminated in the Los Angeles riots, and his strongest line in 1988 — "Read My Lips. No New Taxes" — has become the stick with which Bill Clinton beats him hardest.

For two years the Bush presidency was successful, with public attention riveted

on events overseas. The Berlin Wall fell, communism collapsed, and Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

But if ever there was a moment for a president to tackle America's soaring budget deficit and endemic social problems, it was early 1991. Mr Bush's approval ratings nudged 90 per cent. Capitol Hill's Democrats were cowed. But in a victory address to Congress on March 9 Mr Bush demanded nothing more than prompt action on crime and transport bills.

Initiatives, notably on reforming health care, were announced but never pursued. The economy was expected to recover well before the election. This was a president coasting towards seemingly inevitable re-election.

That summer Mr Bush went off to London's G7 economic summit and the Soviet Union as the free world's undisputed leader. One by one top Democrats found excuses not to run for president. Mr Bush's ratings were slowly dropping as the economy worsened, but not enough to cause alarm. Re-election plans sat on shelves and the White House did not conduct a single private poll between February and December. Had it done so, it might have detected the grow-

ing anxiety and frustration that led to Harris Wofford's sensational defeat of former attorney-general Richard Thornburgh in that November's Pennsylvania Senate by-election.

The White House not only woke up — it panicked. Mr Bush postponed a trip to Japan. He replaced Mr Sumitru with Samuel Skinner, who was himself replaced eight months later.

What he did not do was rush forward an economic stimulus package as many Republicans advised.

Things began to go wrong: the economic recovery peered out. Mr Bush fell ill in Tokyo and vomited in the Japanese prime minister's lap. He ended

his way to a hostile reception at the Earth summit in Rio, he stopped for a hero's welcome in liberated Panama but was chased from the stage by tear gas. Los Angeles rioted. Ross Perot replaced Mr Buchanan as tormentor-in-chief.

Mr Bush was in thrall to Republican conservatives and his ratings fell further faster than any other president's.

If there is to be a Houdini-like comeback, much of the credit will go to James Baker, who has sought to salvage this campaign. For two months, under Mr Baker's expert tutelage, Mr Bush has again been seeking to win the Oval Office by destroying his opponent.

The bitterness in GOP ranks suggests badly for a dignified Republican exit from the White House if Mr Bush is defeated. 1996 presidential hopefuls are preparing their alibis to explain away their role in this year's disastrous campaign.

The acrimonious divisions in the party are likely to become more prominent even if Mr Bush is re-elected. A second-term Mr Bush would be almost a lame duck in terms of influencing the GOP's future ideological direction, even if the president, who is famously uninterested in ideas, wanted to.

One of Mr Bush's closest aides compared the campaign to watching a friend die of a cancer that could have been treated if diagnosed in time. "We have tried every known cure. We have tried every experiment and still he keeps getting worse."

### Bush clings to hope of upset

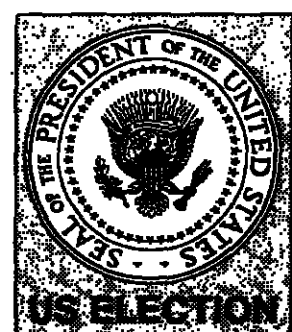
## Clinton awaits prize of 13-month crusade

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

BILL Clinton, his voice gone but seemingly poised for victory in today's presidential election, was rounding off 13 months of non-stop campaigning with one final Herculean effort last night. As the first East Coast voters go to the polls this morning, he will be ending a final 30-hour, 4,100-mile charge around America with a sunrise rally in Colorado.

President Bush, still predicting an upset victory that would eclipse even that of Harry Truman in 1948, was wrapping up his campaign with a six-state swing, culminating in a Houston rally late last night. Whether Mr Bush wins or loses the day, it was his last day's campaigning in a political career that began 28 years ago with an unsuccessful Texas senate race.

Ross Perot has faded, but still looks set to win the largest third party vote since George Wallace's 13.5 per cent in 1968, possibly since Robert La Follette's 16.6 per cent in 1924. He concluded his



efforts last night with a total of two hours of peak-time advertising on all three leading networks.

Yesterday polls all suggested Mr Clinton's slippage had been reversed after a weekend in which Mr Bush, tired and testy, was thrown on to the defensive by new evidence contradicting his claims to have been "out of the loop" during the Iran-Contra scandal.

The CNN-USA Today daily tracking poll gave Mr Clinton 44 per cent, Mr Bush 36 and Ross Perot 14. Apportioning

the undecided vote by historical precedent, that gap widened to 12 points. The Arkansas governor had an eight point lead in an NBC-Wall Street Journal survey, and five points in a Harris poll. Mr Bush has not led in a single poll since last July.

The president appeared finally to have caught Mr Clinton in Ohio — so crucial that the candidates, their wives and running mates have made 23 visits there. Mr Clinton excluded Florida from yesterday's marathon, suggesting he had conceded the state. Last minute polls in other key states showed Mr Bush slightly ahead in Texas, level with Mr Clinton in Wisconsin but still trailing by significant margins in New Jersey, Michigan, Missouri, Colorado and Pennsylvania. A Los Angeles Times state-by-state survey showed Mr Clinton can be confident of 241 of the 270 electoral college votes he requires, Mr Bush of 137. So razor-thin is Mr Bush's margin for error today that he needs to win almost all the 18 states accounting for the other 160 votes.

In a late change of tactics, Mr Perot turned his fire on Mr Clinton as well as Mr Bush. In Sunday night commercial and at a California rally he damned Mr Clinton as unqualified "through background and experience" for America's top job, and suggested he lacked "the moral and ethical standards" required. Mr Perot also insisted he could win. "This will be the damndest landslide this country has ever seen."

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## Voters hold sway on life and death

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

IN ADDITION to choosing a president the American electorate will vote today on hundreds of statewide ballot measures — initiatives, referendums and state constitutional amendments — affecting a variety of issues from abortion to term limits for politicians, from euthanasia to bear hunting.

Many of the ballot measures are highly contentious, such as the one in Oregon that would declare homosexuality "unnatural and perverse", while others are essentially parochial, like the measure to ban steel-jaw traps on public land in Arizona and a proposal to stop strip mining in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Perhaps the most controversial measure is one that would make California the only place in America where doctors can legally help patients at the age of 40 years old to die. Under Proposition 161, the "California Death With Dignity Act", terminally-ill adults who have been diagnosed by two independent doctors as having less than six months to live would be able to request medical help in ending their lives. That wish would have to be expressed more than once, in writing, and signed in the presence of two people who are neither related to nor beneficiaries of the patient.

Proposition 161 was put on the ballot by an organisation called Californians Against Human Suffering, headed by a Los Angeles lawyer whose wife died of cancer at the age of 40 years ago. It is opposed by a range of medical and religious groups that together raised \$1.4 million in three months to fight the measure. Recent polls suggest that Californians are evenly divided over the proposal, with a slim majority in favour.

One man who might be expected to support the mea-

sure, but opposes it, is Jack Kevorkian, the Michigan doctor who helped five women to kill themselves and earned the sobriquet "Doctor Death". Dr Kevorkian argues that the proposal sets unnecessarily precise guidelines on when a doctor can assist suicide, a matter that he says should be established by common medical practice.

This election may also prove to be a matter of life or death in Washington DC where voters will decide whether to impose the death penalty. Amid much bad feeling this measure was forced into the ballot by Congress, which argued that residents should have the opportunity to express their preferences.

One of the most politically sensitive measures, on the ballot in no less than 14 states, would limit the terms in office of members of Congress and state officials. According to election surveys, more than 70 per cent of voters in almost all these states will vote Yes to proposals that broadly aim to limit Senators to two six-year terms, and House members to three two-year terms.

The groundswell of support for such initiatives is an indication of voters' determination to gain more control over their elected representatives, but limiting the time in office of elected officials is expected to face a stiff constitutional challenge in the courts.

Gambling is another popular ballot measure, and voters will be asked to decide whether to permit lotteries in Georgia, Mississippi and Nebraska, bingo in Kentucky and riverboat gambling in Missouri. West Virginia, meanwhile, has come up with the most patriotic proposal. The state's citizens will vote on whether to give cash bonuses to soldiers who served in the Gulf War.



Showing the flag: Clare Farrow, of the English Speaking Union's international department, prepares for tonight's American election party in central London

## Republican campaign mirrors defeat of Carter

Anthony Howard in Washington compares the fortunes of incumbent American presidents battling for re-election



The last incumbent president to be defeated was Jimmy Carter in 1980. Although he had not been trailing as badly in the polls as George Bush did for most of this campaign, the challenge Mr Carter faced was also one of catching up with a rival who all the pollsters had consistently favoured.

In his memoirs, former President Carter relates how by the end of the campaign he convinced himself he had managed to do it: "I believed that I had pulled even with Ronald Reagan over the last weekend. It did not take long for him to discover that he had been deceived."

His crushing defeat — a gap of more than eight million votes between him and Mr Reagan in the total poll and a humiliating margin of 489-49 in the electoral college — did not, however, come as a total surprise. His own pollster, Pat Cadell, had prepared him for the worst on the eve of polling day. "It was hard for us," Mr Carter subsequently wrote, "to believe the dimensions of what Pat was telling us but it later proved to be accurate."

The parallel between this year and 1980 has always

been the Republican campaign's private nightmare, and one day we shall, no doubt, learn whether news of impending doom was broken yesterday to President Bush in much the same way as it was a dozen years ago. Certainly, in the last 24 hours most of the confidence seems to have gone out of the Bush-Quayle campaign.

Unless the pollsters are confounded tomorrow, this year's will hardly rate as one of the more exciting races for the White House. Apart from a last-minute flurry, when President Bush suddenly seemed to be closing up on Bill Clinton, its outcome has somehow looked predictable. By contrast, the 1976 contest, the last occasion the Democrats won the presidency back from the Republicans, was a genuine toss-up.

Initially, Mr Carter, like Mr Clinton a Southern governor challenging an incumbent

president (although Gerald Ford was, of course, unelected) appeared to have everything going for him. He certainly rode the wave of post-Watergate resentment with considerable skill. But, as the campaign went on, his commanding poll lead began to dwindle, much more inexorably than Mr Clinton's briefly seemed to do last week. By election day, President Ford had certainly come to believe in victory. In the end he was robbed of it by less than 2 per cent of the vote and the narrowest result in the electoral college (290-247) of any postwar election.

The 1960 presidential race remains, however, the classic diffidence of modern American politics. The polls that year regularly reflected the slenderest of margins between the Democratic challenger, Senator John F. Kennedy, and his Republican rival, the then vice-president Richard Nixon. There were seldom

more than two or three percentage points in it, though initially a solid advantage had appeared to lie with the Nixon-Lodge ticket taking over from eight comfortable years of the Eisenhower presidency. Partly thanks to the first-ever presidential debates, Kennedy managed, though gradually, to edge ahead and in the final opinion poll surveys enjoyed an average lead of two points. That, however, proved to be a considerable overestimate. Kennedy finally won by a margin of just 0.2 per cent or a smattering of 115,000 votes out of 69 million while at the same time carrying the electoral college by a surprisingly solid margin of 303-219.

The election that finally brought Mr Nixon to the White House in 1968 was also a close-run thing, at least in terms of the popular vote. The Democratic standard bearer that year was vice-president Hubert Humphrey, who had inherited a virtually bankrupt political estate from President Johnson. The war in Vietnam had driven the Democratic party apart and Humphrey's nomination had been opposed by both Senator Robert Kennedy (assassinated

that summer) and by Senator Eugene McCarthy, who ended up giving his fellow Minnesotan the most hearty and lukewarm of endorsements.

But for three months Humphrey fought doggedly on, in defiance of polls that as late as October were giving Mr Nixon a dominating 12-point lead. By polling day, the incumbent vice-president had closed the gap to a single point. If the election had lasted another week, he would probably have brought off the greatest upset victory since Harry Truman in 1948. As it was, he lost the popular vote by a margin of only just over half-a-million (or 0.7 per cent), although once again the electoral college distorted the result by yielding Nixon 301 votes to Humphrey's 191.

If he does lose tomorrow, President Bush will inevitably face a melancholy last 11 weeks in office. The American political system believes in orderly transition of power — a president is not instantly bundled out of the White House as a prime minister is out of the back door of Downing Street — but a price has to be paid for that in terms of constitutional paralysis and a lame-duck presidency.

## Puerto Rico succumbs to rift of tongues

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

EFFORTS to bring about statehood for Puerto Rico may be given a boost today if the Caribbean island's voters elect a political outsider as governor of what is America's biggest overseas dependency.

Pedro Rossello, of the New Progressive Party, which favours statehood, was ahead in the opinion polls until last week when, in a display that even his supporters confessed was at best infantile, he stuck his tongue out at his leading opponent, Victoria Muñoz, of the incumbent Popular Democratic Party, which advocates continued commonwealth status for the island.

The damage to Mr Rossello's campaign worsened when a complete tape of the debate, including untransmitted material, was released. While Mrs Muñoz was addressing the audience, he mimicked her and made childish gestures. Benny Cerezo, a political analyst, said: "That raised very serious doubts about Rossello among people from all political persuasions."

If he is elected, Mr Rossello has promised to introduce a plebiscite about petitioning Congress for statehood. Also, if the "statehooders" win, new pressure will be placed on the American authorities to consider the desires of Puerto Ricans, an issue that Congress has sought to ignore.

Mrs Muñoz, who is a local senator, has struggled against the male-dominated politics of the island. She has played up her lineage as the daughter of a family of distinguished Puerto Rican statesmen by running television advertisements with images of herself mixed in with those of Baroness Thatcher, Indira Gandhi and Corazon Aquino.

## 'Don't call me First Lady' says Hillary

Continued from page 1  
Washington hostess Pamela Harriman will be at the top of the list, after she raised \$2 million (£1.29 million) for the Democrats at a \$1,000-a-head party on her Virginia estate.

The less that FOBs are willing to talk before the result, the more likely they are to be in the inner circle. "Very much off the record," said a serious Democratic socialite. "Washington will be terribly different. It will be a younger, more hands-on group who will work long hours. It will be much more informal — there will be a lot of children about, because that's the generation coming in. Everyone's very excited. The Bush years have been so boring and the Reagans were, well, rather vulgar."

The cultural elite will all be there: Hollywood and the liberal media have played an important part in pushing for the Democrats. The doyenne of Hollywood fundraising, Barbara Streisand, is sure to bring Jack Nicholson, Warren Beatty, Annette Bening, Geena Davis in her wake. Harry and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, Hollywood producers of the right-on *Designing Women* and the 14-minute *Life of Clinton* film shown at the convention, are long-time friends, originally from Little Rock.

Other Little Rockers expected in town include Martin Luther King biographer, Taylor Branch, who shared a flat with the Clintons just after they left university, and worked with Mr Clinton on the failed election campaign for George McGovern.

Estate agents are worried that house prices might come as a shock to Arkansas folk. "I expect some of them will rent at first," says Bill Harris, of the Georgetown property company Pardee. "Democrats tend to go for less expensive properties, and our average house sale is \$450,000." Mixed-race and "artsy" Adams Morgan is expected to replace all-white Georgetown as the hip district to live in.

The Clinton team likes to emphasise similarities with the glowing Kennedy years, when youth, optimism and good looks ruled. The last Democratic interlude, the Carter's reign, was marked by extreme dreariness. Jimmy Carter turned the heating down to save money, and Rosalynn had to wear grim high-necked dresses to balls. She decided to stop all White House parties at 11pm to avoid paying the staff overtime, and served only wine. She considered "hard liquor" a waste of money.

The excesses of the Reagan years are not expected to return either. The vast blue and red satin ball dresses are being purged from Georgetown shops in favour of sleeker ones. Bill Bliss is out. Donna Karan, one of Mrs Clinton's favourite designers, is in.

White House society will be more mixed, with minorities joining the mainstream. Gay friends such as David Milner, an influential political organiser and election adviser, will be regular guests, and women will be invited in their own right.

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# Serb radicals start fierce campaign to overthrow Panic

FROM TIM JUDAH AND DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

YUGOSLAVIA's top military and political leaders met in emergency session yesterday as radical Serb nationalists launched a campaign to depose Milan Panic, the prime minister.

Meanwhile, Bosnian peace hopes plummeted as the Bosnian Serb "parliament" in Banja Luka said it was withdrawing its delegation from talks on the republic's future in Geneva. It issued a statement rejecting the constitutional proposal put forward by international mediators Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance last week and said it would only return if the right to "self-determination" was granted.

In the Bosnian context "self-determination" is code for the right to secede, allowing Serbs and Croats to join their "mother-republics". It is precisely this form of partition that has been ruled out by the peace negotiators.

The state council met in Belgrade as the Yugoslav parliament debated a motion of no confidence in Mr Panic which was supported by nationalist extremists and Mr Milosevic's ruling Socialist Party. One of the fiercest attacks came from Vladislav Jovanovic, the Serbian foreign minister, who accused Mr Panic of "helping the world to disband Yugoslavia". Another

deputy called Mr Panic a "madman... pushing Serbia into civil war". Socialists and nationalists have objected to Mr Panic's conciliatory policies towards Croats and ethnic Albanians and accuse him of being a traitor and an American agent.

Deputies from Montenegro are supporting Mr Panic and are even threatening to abandon the two-republic Yugoslavia and let the Serbs settle their own problems. One deputy from Montenegro's ruling party said yesterday that a vote against Mr Panic would be a vote "for total isolation, perhaps even for a civil war".

The European Community yesterday condemned a Serb attack on the Bosnian town of Jajce. A statement issued by Britain in its role as EC president said: "The Community and its member states condemn the recent attack on Jajce by Serb militia and the barbarous shelling of civilians leaving the town. These attacks must cease without delay."

Jajce fell to Serb forces last Thursday, forcing 35,000 civilians and Croat and Muslim troops to flee towards nearby Travnik — the largest single exodus of the war, according to United Nations relief officials.

Officials of the Geneva Conference argue that the road to peace in Bosnia runs through Zagreb and Belgrade. Mr Milosevic has snubbed the talks but Lord Owen and Mr Vance have worked with Mr Cosic and Mr Panic in the hope that they will be able to deliver the Bosnian Serbs.

The developments of the last three days suggest this strategy is now doomed. Over the weekend the Bosnian Serbs laid the legal basis for greater Serbia and have now said they will not return to the talks unless they effectively sanction their right to do this. The attacks on Mr Panic and Mr Cosic in Belgrade are connected because both have agreed to recognise Bosnia's international frontier, something that Mr Milosevic has rejected.

If the nation to unseat Mr Panic succeeds, Yugoslavia will be thrust ever deeper into turmoil, especially if Mr Cosic carries out his threat to resign. Elections scheduled for December may then be cancelled or, in the event of an opposition boycott, Mr Milosevic's Socialist and his nationalist allies will have the field to themselves.



Fighting for crumbs: starving refugees, who fled the town of Jajce when it fell to Serb forces last week, grab bits of bread in Travnik yesterday

## Far right spreads tentacles through a blighted Russia

FROM ANNE MCELVOY IN MOSCOW

**Sinister ideologies are filling Russia's spiritual void. Slavic nationalism is close to fascism**

HER hefty rubber boots did not quite do justice to the bride's white lace. Her bridesmaid wore pink Lycra leggings and chucked a bunch of willing gladioli as the priest intoned the ancient liturgy in a fine sonorous bass.

Only the bemuddled usher, in jet black uniform and knee-length black boots, and the array of nationalist literature and pictures of Serb corpses in the porch indicated that Tatiana was plighting her troth to Konstantin in the church that has become the ex officio headquarters of Russia's far-right Pamyat (Memory) movement and its affiliates.

The paramilitary organisation has 400 named members and claims several thousand more supporters. It has profited from the chaotic state of Russian democracy and is currently lending itself credence by linking arms with the Orthodox Church in exile — the United States-based rival to the state-affiliated Russian Orthodox Church, which has been discredited by revelations of its links with the KGB.

Father Aleksi is not ashamed of the church's association with an organisation that is openly anti-Semitic. Its leader, Dimitri Vasilyev, a self-declared "poet, metaphysician and film-director" with the bearing of an over-grown night-club bouncer, recently announced: "We do not fear the word 'fascism'. It is a spiritual phenomenon."

No organisation in Russia more disturbingly than Pamyat represents the allure of spirituality laced with brutality and the attraction of the irrational in times of social uncertainty. Its sympathisers do a brisk trade in pamphlets in the grimy underpasses of the city. In St Petersburg, the organisation advertises its world-view openly.

This view has been neatly summarised in Mr Vasilyev's words that "Zionism and

ing sympathy for the organisation in the police and security service, many of whom have shed their commitment to Communism in favour of the new nationalism.

After the wedding Father Aleksi pronounced a blessing, wishing the congregation peace and honour before embarking on a careful justification of Pamyat, whose members he refers to as "our fighters". Asked if the paramilitary nature of the organisation is not at odds with the clerical message, he replies that the "fighters" are wearing black "in mourning for Russia as long as it struggles under the yoke of atheism and Communism".

Sacha Nikolayev, a burly youth selling badly printed brochures, is one of the new breed of young Pamyat supporters who admits that he has never knowingly met a Jew but talks with casual hatred of the "Yids who are seizing power" and the "international conspiracy against Russia".

He worships Igor Talkov, the talented but unbalanced nationalist pop-singer who was shot dead, apparently in a post-concert brawl, earlier this year. Talkov has since been elevated to the status of right-wing martyr.

Pamyat now enjoys the support of Aleksandr Nevzorov, the demagogic presenter of St Petersburg television's cult 600 Seconds show whose mass audience throughout Russia was last week treated to a defence of the group's activities. The conclusion reached was that "the ideological pie of democracy has been eaten up".

With a handful of glibly cloying to bowdlerise them, a clutch of useful friends in high places, and a population desperate for the distraction from hardship that hatred brings, Pamyat is unlikely to find itself short of new supporters in the near future.



## Emergency declared in Caucasus

BY ANNE MCELVOY

RUSSIA has declared a state of emergency in two regions of the northern Caucasus where fighting continued yesterday despite the deployment on Sunday of several thousand interior ministry troops from Moscow.

A spokesman for President Yeltsin said the emergency decree would apply to North Ossetia and Ingushetia and would remain in force for a month. The decree includes a provision to disarm the rival factions by force if necessary.

The airport at Vladikavkaz, the North Ossetian capital, was under military control yesterday, and Russian troops in armoured vehicles were patrolling the area. A curfew was in force in the city.

The declaration of a state of emergency and the immediate dispatch of troops to the area show how seriously Mr Yeltsin views unrest in a region of arbitrary borders whose patchwork of ethnic groups. He is clearly anxious to contain the fighting before instability spreads in the region. Russia's policy is to block access by Ingush fighters to Vladikavkaz, which they regard as their historic home. The Russian parliament met in closed session yesterday afternoon to discuss the unrest, which killed dozens of people at the weekend.

□ Military warned: Edward Shevardnadze, the Georgian leader, yesterday told his military that their seizure of a Russian ammunition dump in the town of Akhaltsikhi was "playing with fire". He called on its leaders to restore discipline.

## RAF will honour sultan

London: The Sultan of Brunei, His Majesty Sir Muda Hassanal Bolkiah Muizaddin Wadaulah, will have another title to add to his collection at the conclusion of his first state visit to Britain which begins today (David Watts writes).

The monarch will become an honorary marshal of the RAF. His visit will include a state dinner with the Queen, tea with the Queen Mother and he will attend the beating of the retreat at the Tower of London, to be carried out by the Princess Elizabeth Gurkha regiment. A battalion of the Gurkhas continues to protect Brunei and the sultan's \$31,000 million (£20,000 million) fortune.

## Rebels routed

Dushanbe: About 300 pro-Communist rebels from the Kulyab region in Tajikistan were pushed back by troops loyal to the Tajik government after reaching the outskirts of the capital Dushanbe, as heavy fighting was heard, military sources said. (AFP)

## Drug seized

Madrid: Drug squad agents seized a tonne of cocaine with a street value of £187 million from a house in the town of Brunete, near Madrid, in one of the biggest hauls ever in Spain. Ten people, including a number of Colombians, were arrested. (Reuters)

## Muslims gain

Ankara: The Muslim fundamentalist Welfare party, which campaigns for an Islamic state, capitalised on discontent among Istanbul's poor, capturing nearly a third of the vote in scattered municipal elections, according to official returns. (AP)

## False profits

Seoul: The South Korean Damai Missionary Church, which predicted the world would end last week, is disbanding. Fraud proceedings have started against its leaders for alleged profiteering from followers who handed over property. (Reuters)

## How to play your cards and live

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN CENTRAL BOSNIA

EVERY journalist working in what used to be Yugoslavia has learnt to dread the moment when his car rounds a corner and the road ahead is suddenly full of armed men looking the way. Such checkpoints signal bandit country.

Journalists can cross frontlines and wander around war zones in the former Yugoslavia but they need four sets of accreditation: United Nations, Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian. The first safety tip is get the right card out. Drivers learn to shuffle their collection of accreditations faster than a card sharp on Oxford Street, but even that is no guarantee of safe passage.

A Dutch colleague was held for hours at gunpoint after Serbs discovered his Croatian card.

The most frightening checkpoints are those set up by Serb irregulars, often drunk with power and alcohol. Even they can have a sense of humour. A carload of mostly American journalists was pulled in for questioning, and released one by one apart from the man writing for a 'Dallas' newspaper.

"You are from Dallas?" asked the Serb.

"Yes," replied the nervous writer.

"You must give us special information before you can leave."

"Er, yes, of course. What do you want to know?"

"Whoshot JFK?" demanded the Serb.

The soldiers, manning checkpoints may look intimidating but they often possess useful intelligence about fighting nearby.

Safety tip number two is that it is usually easier to get in than out. Driving along a deserted mountain path in central Bosnia we were heading towards Novi Travnik, scene of clashes between Croats and Muslims. The Bosnian army was dug into a shallow valley and we talked them into moving their tank traps aside to let us pass.

It was a mistake. As we drove into the woods, groups of camouflaged soldiers kept materialising from the undergrowth, including a stranded unit of nervous Croat guerrillas, stuck between Bosnian lines. It rapidly became clear we were heading straight into the war zone proper as we



## Korean press shies away from inscrutable occidentals

FROM JOANNA FYTMAN IN SEOUL

DECKED out in billowing canary silk skirts, silk hats topped with pheasant feathers that wagged furiously in the wind, and beads slung under the chin, the four dozen young men from the South Korean military academy at the welcoming ceremony for the Prince and Princess of Wales may have felt a little silly as the wind whipped up under their 14th century-style skirts, setting hems flapping indecorously around knobby knees.

But they certainly did not show it. As the prince paced the red carpet past a more orthodox brass band and an assembly of conventionally dressed army and navy personnel, the members of the traditional Chibudae ensemble proudly lifted conch shells and rudimentary pipes and trumpets to their lips and struck up with a rather jocular little number composed in 1390.

The prince, receiving an aerial at close quarters, managed to keep a natural wince at bay and marched smartly past as the cacophony gathered pace, sounding to untrained ears rather like a

classroom of toddlers experimenting with their first musical instruments.

The princess smiled wanly through this assault on the royal eardrums, perhaps more concerned that in her subtle primrose yellow suit and navy hat, she had been badly upstaged by the military men in their riotous array of stylish jewel-coloured silks.

But the ordeal did not last long. After the prince and princess were welcomed by Hyun Soong Jung, the South Korean prime minister, and David Wright, the British ambassador, they were whisked off sitting cozily together in the back seat of a limousine, under intense scrutiny from the roomy knees of the British royal hack pack. They laid a wreath at the national cemetery and presided over an opening ceremony for the new British embassy building in central Seoul.

Then, duties completed for the first day of their four-day visit, they were deposited for the night in a £2,500-suite at the glitzy Hyatt Hotel, closely followed by an entourage of 22 minders.

With tales of further mar-



Top brass: the Prince of Wales inspects a guard of honour as he arrives at Seoul's military airport yesterday on the first official royal visit to South Korea

tal traumas reportedly about to be revealed in the paperback version of Andrew Morton's book *Diana: Her True Story*, due for release in America next week, the royal hack pack in Seoul has been prowling the corridors of the hotel, casing the joint for photographic vantage points and wondering if it is worth staking out the swimming pool for a possible early

morning shot of the princess in aquatic mood. Members of the Korean press, however, have none of the prurient interest in the royal couple's sleeping, or indeed any other, arrangements and appear to have other things on their minds such as the discovery last week of a stash of weapons, apparently belonging to North Korean guerrillas on an island just north of Seoul.

The man on the Seoul omnibus has so dim a recognition of this latest batch of visiting royal personages that the state television network was required to jog the collective Korean memory with a documentary last week on the royal wedding and a few related details of the Windsors' lives.

Despite their unusually anonymous status, the royal

couple's visit is expected to be of some use to British industrial manufacturers who sorely need to have their profiles raised in a country which looks naturally to America as its market, and to Japan and Germany as its suppliers of machine products and which ran up a £150 million trade surplus with Britain last year.

The prince will open a Britain for Korea fair to trumpet the names of 25 potential British exporters, and the princess will elegantly unveil a brand new British-made bath at the Salvation Army home for the elderly.

However, it is questionable whether the Koreans, after four days of seeing the prince and princess visit department stores and shipyards in the hope of enticing Korean investment on to British soil, and four days of having their normally exorbitant traffic conditions snarled further by the passage of royal limousines, will troop off to Britain en masse as tourists.

The most promising prospect may be for the publishing company which has just translated Morton's book into Korean.

Photograph, page 20

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## Pretoria keeps its distance

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SOUTH Africa will not become directly involved in Angola peace efforts because it would arouse suspicion of interference in Luanda's affairs, R.F. "Pik" Botha, the foreign minister, said yesterday. But a ministry source said Pretoria wanted an end to the fighting as it was eroding international confidence.

Philip Nel, a Stellenbosch University political scientist, believes that the conflict is a logical consequence of years of South African destabilisation of its black-ruled neighbours. Angola's civil war mirrors the fears of South Africans about the transition to democracy. It bolsters white, right-wing predictions of post-apartheid anarchy. For the African National Congress, it proves that whites will continue to manipulate the will of a black majority. Mr Botha said South Africans would be evacuated.

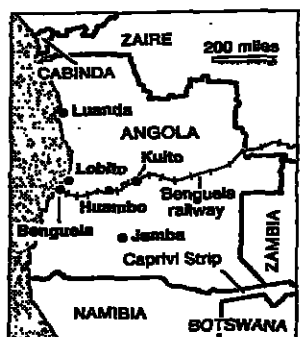
## Luanda mobilises heavily armed police on frontline to push back Unita guerrillas

# Angolan forces regain control of key cities

BY MILES BREDIN IN LUANDA AND SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

ANGOLAN government forces appeared yesterday to have regained control of Luanda after four days' fighting against Unita, the former rebel movement. In the capital and four other cities. More than 1,000 people have died. Jeremias Chitunda and Elias Salupeto Pena, two leaders of Unita — the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola — were reported killed. A Unita foreign affairs spokesman, Abel Chivukuvku, was reported wounded and captured. There were also foreign casualties. Bulgaria's chargé d'affaires in Luanda, Ivan Kotov, was said to have been kidnapped.

On Sunday night, the United Nations announced that it had arranged a ceasefire to prevent Angola sliding back into full-scale civil war. Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general, spoke to Jonas Savimbi, the Unita leader, by satellite telephone and persuaded him to accept a ceasefire. Dr Savimbi rejects



Unita's defeat in September's elections.

Fifteen American diplomats were released yesterday from three days of terror, when they were loaded into armoured personnel carriers and driven to safety with an escort of three T54 tanks. They had been trapped in the US embassy compound in Luanda while a savage battle went on around their heads. Three mortar shells fell in the compound, and there was severe damage in small areas

crossfire as staff took cover in secure areas. The British ambassador, John Flynn, was credited by Mary Speers, a US embassy official, as securing their release.

Luanda descended into anarchy on Saturday when Unita forces attacked a police station opposite their headquarters in the Hotel Turismo. A heavy gunfight erupted, and according to Portuguese government sources in Lisbon, the ruling MPLA — the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola — used this as an excuse to wipe out Unita by legitimate means. Members of crack riot police, the "Ninjas", poured rocket-propelled grenades, mortar and smallarms fire into the Unita hotel, zig-zagging from parked car to doorway as they advanced up the street. Unita returned heavy machinegun fire and grenades.

The MPLA has been careful to use the police to attack Unita, keeping army interven-



Battle beat: Angolan television showing a Luanda policeman armed with rocket-propelled grenades and assault rifle.

tion to a minimum to help guarantee international support for its actions. Peace monitors are overlooking that Angolan police are equipped with tanks, armoured personnel carriers and mortars. The fighting spread to other

areas of the city later in the day and from there to the Miramar, an area of Luanda where many foreign embassies and a house belonging to Dr Savimbi are located. A two-day battle ensued around the American embassy. Ms

Speers says they owed their lives to "the discipline of both Unita and the Ninjas".

The Americans were able to refuse an invitation to join Unita in Dr Savimbi's house and, unlike two British hostages who have now been released, were not forced to accompany them. They stayed in their compound negotiating with the help of the British and the UN and were eventually given safe passage by General Rué Ndhalu of the MPLA.

The diplomats were driven

to the Meridien Hotel, where many other expatriates were awaiting evacuation, in a convoy of tanks which put down heavy covering fire as they ground slowly through the streets. The 15 Americans arrived at the hotel relieved and happy but looking forward to the next stage of their evacuation.

However, Edward DeJannette, the American ambassador-designate and three others, are determined to stay behind to monitor the peace process.

## Ex-pilot has Ghana win in his sights

BY DAVID WATTS, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

GHANA'S leader, Fli Lt Jerry Rawlings, seems poised to break the current run of defeats for incumbent African leaders when his countrymen go to the polls today.

With little to choose between the parties, the only real issue is whether Ghanaians want the unpredictable former air force pilot who seized power in 1981 to continue his rule.

He banned party politics and has run the country in his own dictatorial style, preventing some of those who might have run against him from returning to contest elections. However, he lifted the ban on parties in May and set up a National Democratic Congress — the successor to the ruling Provisional National Defence Council.

The opposition is complaining loudly about electoral rolls, which they claim have never been purged of the dead and the absent. Even Fli Lt Rawlings' name appears twice on the rolls — "but one has to assume he doesn't intend to vote twice," said a Commonwealth observer.

"There have been the usual complaints about the electoral roll," said the Commonwealth observer group's spokesman, "but we're not absolutely certain that there has been any padding. Whether the rolls will affect free elections is something we are keeping an open mind about." Some fear that the rolls contain as many as 1.5 million names too many.

The opposition, led by the

conservative New Patriotic party of Albert Adu Boahen, always had the option of polling out of the election because of the electoral lists but has chosen not to do so. The 25-strong Commonwealth group, representing 30 nations and led by Sir Ellis Clark, a former governor of Trinidad and Tobago, has toured the country but found no evidence to back claims of violence and intimidation. Nor had the spokesman serious concerns about double voting.

In urban areas, people are likely to have to queue to vote. "If it's anything like the Zambian election, people will have to queue for or five hours to vote. They're hardly likely to do that twice," the spokesman said. Rural polling stations will have only some 500 to 700 voters each and will be easier to monitor.



Rawlings: piled in a dictatorial style

## Renamo 'supplying Inkatha with arms'

FROM MICHAEL HAMLIN IN JOHANNESBURG

CLAIMS that the Inkatha Freedom Party has established an armed wing supplied with automatic assault rifles from Renamo rebels in Mozambique are being investigated here.

The allegations come from a former prominent member of Inkatha, a white adventurer who came to South Africa from Zimbabwe, and who has now been expelled to Britain.

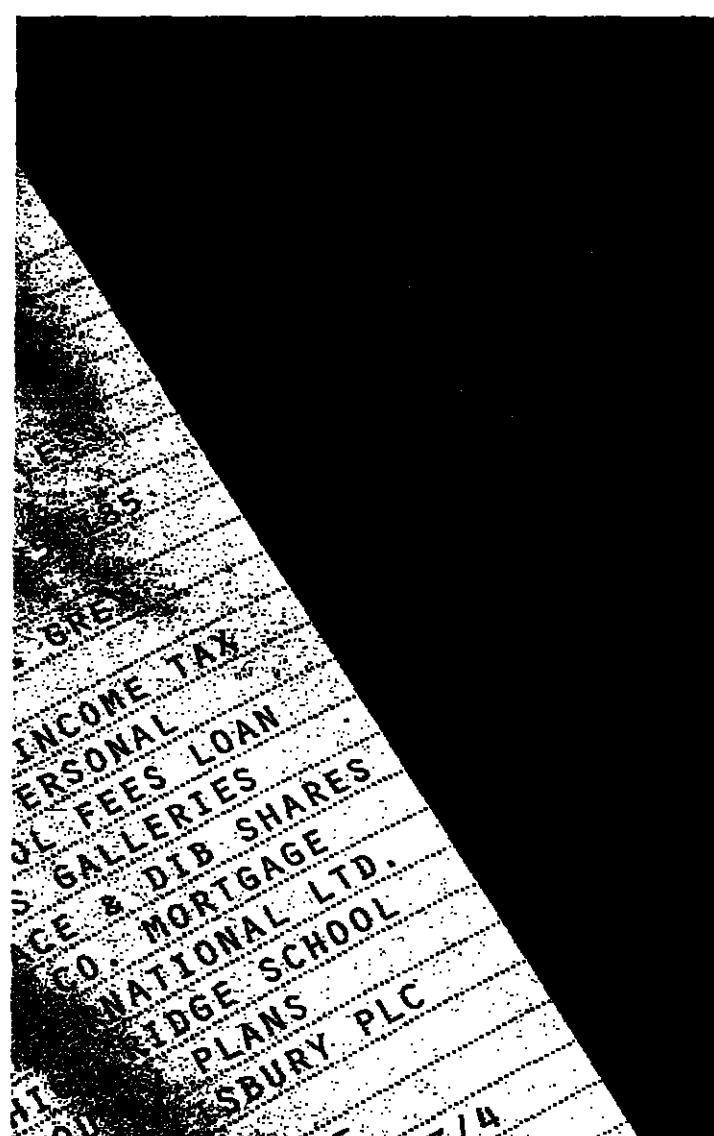
Bruce Anderson, who was once a member of the far-right National Front in Britain, says in affidavit given to the *Johannesburg Sunday Star* that he and a friend who was deeply involved with Mozambique rebels obtained guns and explosives to arm Inkatha members. Mr Anderson told the *Sunday Star* that the guns were hidden somewhere near Roodepoort, not far from Johannesburg. He also said that the South African Defence Force was involved with him in a plan to destabilise the African National Congress.

The defence force and the mainly Zulu Inkatha denied the allegations and asked Mr Justice Richard Goldstone, who has just wound up an enquiry into the Boipatong massacre, to look into the claims, as has the ANC.

The *Sunday Star* report said that the guns brought in from Mozambique were handed out to hostel dwellers, many of whom, it claimed, were members of the Inkatha military wing. Mr Anderson was quoted as saying that he hoped his franchise "will persuade the ANC moderates to bring the radicals and communists into line to avoid a civil war".

The fighting in the hills and valleys of KwaZulu and the rest of Natal between members of the ANC and Inkatha claimed another five lives over the weekend. The ANC is proposing to send a high-level delegation to Natal this week to revive the national peace accord. The delegates will be 15 members of the movement's national executive led by Walter Sisulu, the deputy president, Cyril Ramaphosa, secretary-general, and his deputy, Jacob Zuma, the only Zulu on the ANC executive.

But ANC officials said there are no plans for them to meet their Inkatha counterparts officially. A spokesman for Inkatha said that there was no prospect of it attending a meeting of peace accord signatories until "the surrogacy question is settled".



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## THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE US ELECTION

## Unlocking the White House door



**Jamie Dettmer** outlines the key states in a close finish, and the electoral college that will determine the next president

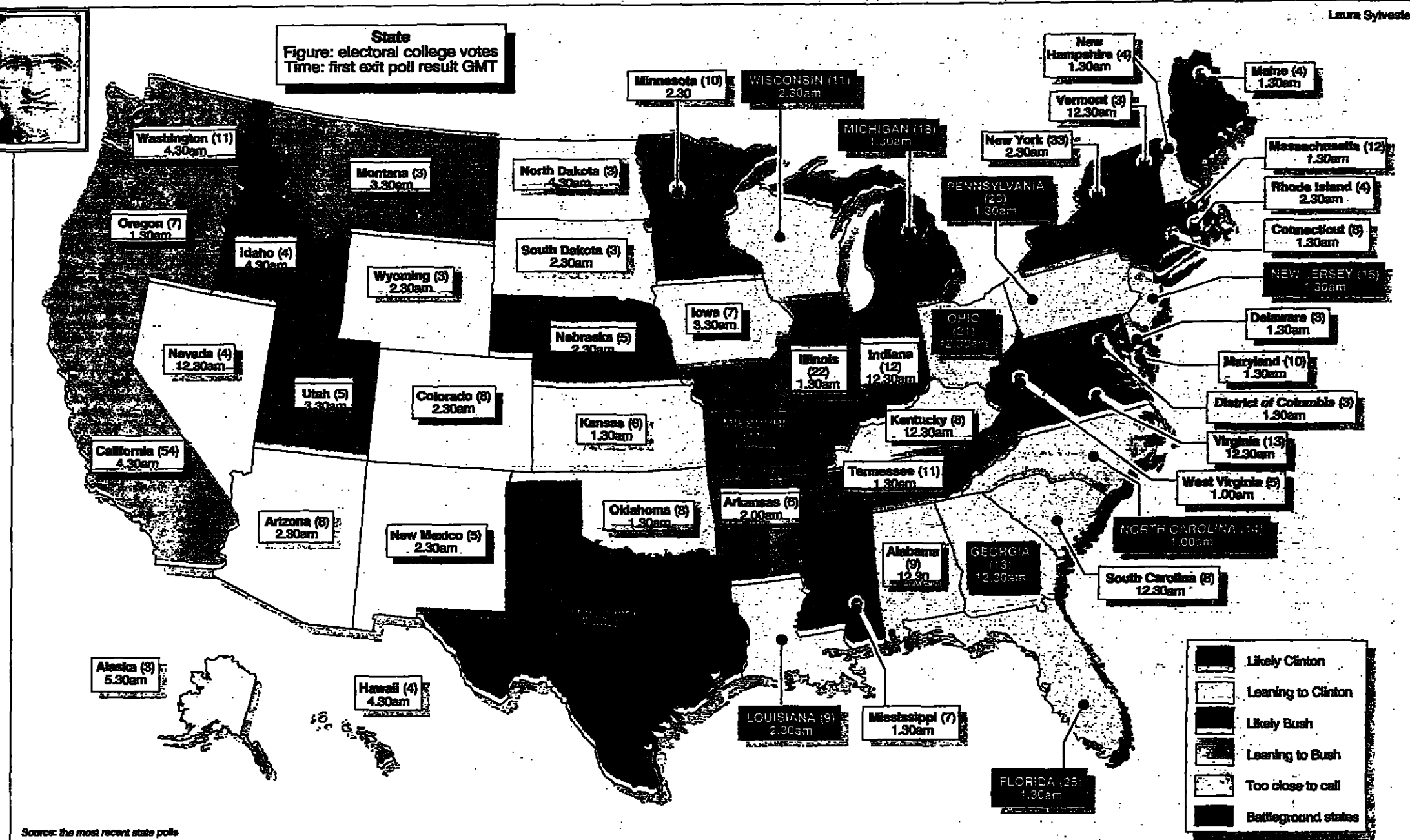
Forty-four years ago on election night, President Harry Truman retired to bed an hour after the first returns had begun to filter in from eastern seaboard states. The frontrunner, Thomas Dewey, appeared to be heading for victory. At midnight, Truman woke up, switched on the radio and heard that he was "undoubtedly beaten". Convinced that he would in fact win, "Give 'em hell" Harry rolled over and went back to sleep.

Neither President Bush nor Governor Clinton will be as nonchalant tonight as America's 33rd president was in 1948. With the development of exit polls and technical improvements in communications and broadcasting, they will receive a battery of facts, figures and predictions that Truman did not have to suffer.

The national polls have been moving Mr Bush's way in the past week. The race has narrowed and could well, in American political jargon, turn into a "squeaker" (close finish). Mr Clinton's position as favourite is based on the political geography of this election. It is much easier to imagine victory scenarios for Mr Clinton than for Mr Bush. The statewide polls have continued to point to a Clinton win, although it is worth remembering that many of the state surveys are almost a week out of date.

A presidential election is not decided by a straightforward tally of the popular vote. The winner is the candidate who gains 50 per cent or more — that is, at least 270 — of the US electoral college votes. The electoral college consists of delegations from each state and totals 538 members. The college members cast their votes in accordance with how their state votes. The size of each state delegation to the college is equal to the size of its congressional representation, which is based on the size of a state's population. For example, California, America's most populous state at almost 30 million, has the largest number of college members, 54, because it has 52 representatives and two senators.

It is tradition, not law, which dictates that the college members, who are elected by each state every



four years, cast their votes in accordance with how the public voted in their state on a "winner takes all" basis. Technically, a presidential contender could win an election by securing the support of the 11 largest states alone, although no candidate has ever opted for such a risky strategy. It is also possible for the victor to win in the electoral college and yet have come second in the popular vote, although this has not happened since 1888.

Mr Clinton's strength is based on his commanding leads in California and New York, the two largest states, which have a combined college value of 87. Since the summer, the Republicans have virtually conceded both states. So the third and fourth largest states, Texas and Florida, which have a combined college value of 57, are crucial for Mr Bush. Texas has not voted Democrat in a presidential election for 16 years, and Florida has backed the Democrats only twice since 1952.

The depth of the disaffection with Mr Bush can be gauged by the uphill struggle he has faced in both

of his "must win" states. Mr Clinton and Mr Bush, who has lost support in both states to Ross Perot, have been neck and neck in Texas and Florida. A week ago, a poll in Texas suggested that Mr Clinton had pulled ahead, but in the past few days the president has had a late surge in the Lone Star state, where he could also benefit from voters defecting from Ross Perot at the last minute.

As well as winning Texas and Florida, the president has to maintain the support of the states in the Deep South, which have had a Republican lock on them since Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964. In the past 24 years only Jimmy Carter, in 1976, was able to wrest the Confederate states and their 147 college votes from the Republicans. This year, the Grand Old Party has faced a tough battle in the south as Democrats have capitalised on their all southern presidential ticket. Mr Clinton has been trying to copy Jimmy Carter's success by appealing to both southern blacks and poor southern whites. He has made strong headway in Georgia,

Louisiana and North Carolina — with Texas and Florida, these are the five southern battleground states. Mr Clinton should take Arkansas, his own home state, and Tennessee, the home state of his running mate, Al Gore. Georgia and North Carolina will be among the first states to declare results tonight. If they turn Democrat, it will look like Mr Clinton's night.

Even if the president has managed to take Texas, Florida and virtually the whole of the Deep South, he will not win unless he carries at least three of the six battleground states in the North East and Midwest: Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, Missouri and Wisconsin are the northern battleground states of this election, and have been since the conventions in the summer. Illinois was another until the Republicans all but conceded there a few weeks ago. With the support of California, New York, border states such as Maryland, a handful of southern states and several western states which backed Michael Dukakis in 1988, Mr Clinton also needs at least three of the six battleground states to win. All of these have troubled economies and have proved fertile ground for Democrat attacks on the president's handling of the economy.

Ohio, the most sympathetic to Mr Bush of the battleground states, will declare in the first batch tonight, together with Georgia and North Carolina. If the so-called Buckeye state supports Mr Clinton, the other key battle states will probably back the Democrat ticket as well.

ISSUES	BUSH	CLINTON	PEROT
TAXES	Would cut income taxes for all 10 Congress agrees to offsetting spending cuts. Supports a \$500 (\$322) increase in personal income tax exemption.	Would increase marginal rate of taxation on those earning more than \$200,000. Families with gross incomes under about \$60,000 would receive tax credit of \$300 per child.	Would raise tax rates on individuals with earnings over \$65,550 and households with incomes over \$80,250 from 31 per cent to 33 per cent. Would raise tax on petrol.
HEALTH CARE	Wants vouchers to help the poor buy health insurance, but argues that "health care choices should remain in the hands of the people, not government bureaucrats".	Proposes universal health insurance, and a board of national health to set limits for health care spending. Firms would have to insure workers, or pay into a public plan.	Would set up a national board to oversee health budgets and health care reforms, including a basic benefit package for universal health insurance coverage.
ABORTION	Opposes except in cases of rape, incest and where the woman's life is in danger. Wants constitutional amendment to override Roe v. Wade decision which upholds women's right to abortion.	Supports individual right of women to choose abortion, regardless of ability to pay. "The goal... must be to make abortion less necessary, not more difficult or more dangerous."	Favours legalised abortion, federal funding for child sex education, abortions for poor women and wider adoption programmes.
FOREIGN POLICY	Considers the US "sole remaining superpower" with "a certain disproportionate responsibility". Strong advocate of global free trade. Opposes use of ground troops in the former Yugoslavia.	Would cut defence budget by \$80 billion more than Mr Bush over five years and keep fewer troops in Europe. A "fair trader" more than a "free trader". Strongly pro-Israel.	Installs international position unassailable without domestic economic reform. Pro-Israel, opposes deployment of ground troops in former Yugoslavia.
BUDGET DEFICIT	Opposes decreasing deficit by raising taxes. Favors a balanced budget amendment and line-item veto to eliminate extra Congress-backed (portable) spending.	Has promised to reduce the deficit by 50 per cent in four years by increasing taxes on the wealthiest Americans and foreign corporations, pruning the defence budget and controlling health care costs.	Would give top priority to eliminating the budget deficit. Supports large tax increases to reduce deficit. Would cut defence spending by \$754 billion over five years.
CRIME	Would increase spending on new prisons, law and drug enforcement agencies and institute a federal death penalty for "assaults, murder for hire, terrorism and other depraved acts".	Proposes a national police corps, with at least 100,000 new officers, a waiting period for handgun purchases and tougher penalties for domestic violence and white-collar crime.	Would introduce mandatory life sentences without parole for people convicted of three violent crimes, and keep other prisoners in prison until they can develop useful skills.

## Republican hopes low over Congress vote

Today also sees elections for the Senate and House of Representatives, and for state governors

Mr Bush is re-elected. But they may get the three seats they need to curtail Republican filibusters, the minority party's only weapon.

Dianne Feinstein, the former Democratic mayor of San Francisco, looks certain to oust John Seymour in California. Republican Bob Kasten is in trouble in Wisconsin. In Illinois, Carol Moseley Braun (Dem) should become America's first black woman senator. In Colorado, Ben Nighthorse Campbell (Dem) may become America's first American Indian senator since 1929, and California will become the first state with two female senators if Barbara Boxer (Dem) can survive.

The Democrats presently control the House of Representatives (the lower chamber which together with the Senate makes up Congress) by 266 members to 166, with one Independent and two seats vacant. Members of the House stand for re-

election every two years. In theory, strong anti-incumbent sentiment, a record number of retirements and the first favourable boundary changes this century (they are changed every ten years) should mean sweeping Republican gains. The party would then stand a chance of recapturing the House for the first time in decades in the 1994 elections.

But most analysts now believe that because of the recession and Mr Bush's unpopularity, the Republicans will be lucky to gain 15 seats. The House bank and post office scandals and four years of legislative gridlock have reduced public esteem for Congress to its lowest level ever, and many incumbents of both parties may be thrown out. That, allied with 91 retirements, primary defeats and deaths, means that the House is heading for its biggest turnover since 1948.

at least. Up to a quarter of the next House may be freshmen, with record numbers of women, blacks and Hispanics.

Six of the 12 governors' races are in Democrat-held states and six in Republican-held states, but surveys suggest the Democrats could win as many as 11 of the contests. Indiana, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia all look likely to return Democrats to their governors' mansions.

Thomas Carper, presently a congressman, is expected to be the first Democrat to win Delaware since 1972. William Webster, the Missouri Attorney General who persuaded the supreme court to accept tough restrictions on abortion, could lose his gubernatorial bid to Mel Carnahan, Missouri's lieutenant governor. Democrats are also neck and neck with Republicans in Montana, North Carolina and the Republican bastion of New Hampshire.

MARTIN FLETCHER

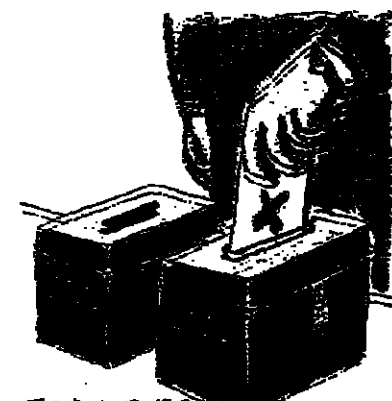
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● Ross Perot is not the smallest ever candidate for president: both James Madison (5ft 4in) and Benjamin Harrison (5ft 6in) were smaller. The taller candidate won 80 per cent of the 21 elections from 1904 to 1984.

● During this election, twice as many Republican staffers have been engaged in negative research as Democrats.

● Bill Clinton and Al Gore (combined age: 93) would be the youngest team ever to get to the White House.

● Vice President Dan Quayle has never lost an election; to maintain this winning streak he visits the dentist immediately after voting. He has made an appointment with his dentist in Indiana.

VOTING in the land of the free is peculiarly complicated. Nothing simple like putting a cross by one of three candidates' names. Instead the brave citizen enters a sort of Tardis and battles with the mysterious voting machine, which may ask for decisions on as many as 80 issues besides the presidency.

The system varies from state to state, but the basic drill is this: the voter enters a cardboard or wooden booth with a curtain. He or she faces a vast bank of switches or flip-

levers, labelled for each candidate, and flicks one for every category. Then the voter pulls down a giant lever which simultaneously records all his preferences by punching holes in a cardboard ballot, and opens the booth curtain.

This year all voters include the presidency, Senate, House of Representatives and local positions such as school governors, local

councillors and neighbourhood commissioners. Then there are the ballot measures, state referendums on anything from the death penalty for murder to a tax on ice cream.

The mechanical card-punching system was designed to stop ballot-box stuffing (putting extra votes in) but results in its own difficulties in each state. In Nevada, for instance, the Votomatic machine has two

pages and three diagrams to explain how it works. New Mexico uses a machine with both pointers and levers, but allows voters just three and a half minutes to make their choices. This causes many to follow the party line by pulling the Democratic or Republican super-lever, which flips all the little switches for the party preferences. It is not surprising, more than half of America's voters stay at home.

KATE MUIR

spirit of the unborn

Get to the









Lynne Truss

### ■ We all start to whistle Colonel Bogey and remember the blitz when the IRA bomb London

A couple of weeks ago, in the aftermath of the St Martin's Lane pub bomb, a senior policeman spoke on the six o'clock news about the need for calm. It was the usual sort of thing. Be vigilant, he said, but on no account allow the bombers to change the way you live your normal life. "OK," I said, encouraged. "It's a deal." And as I switched off the telly, I suddenly felt all warm inside about how brave I was going to be, in the run-up to Christmas — carrying on living my normal life despite the bombs. "Don't worry, Mr Policeman," I said. "I will not cancel my pet-care evening class on a Thursday. I know my duty as a Brit."

Flattery usually makes me nervous, but flatter my British moral fibre, my essential stoical pluck, and in common with most people I accept the tribute graciously, as though I have ever done anything in my life remotely to deserve it. Somehow I know the lyrics of the blitz — *Are we downhearted? We are not downhearted. We would not give them the satisfaction.* And I run through it automatically, whenever the occasion demands, without pausing to think how peculiar it is. How is it that one's attendance at an evening class in pet-manicure can suddenly seem like an act of heroic defiance, like something from *Bridge on the River Kwai*? As I emerge from the tube in the evenings, I find myself whistling "Colonel Bogey" — which is deeply odd, actually, because normally I can't whistle.

"Don't let them change the way you live your normal life." Hmm. It was a clever appeal to make, because it makes you feel good, while at the same time being virtually meaningless. For one thing, how will this policeman be able to tell whether Londoners are being stoical or not, when they always look so bloody miserable in the first place? Ask the average Londoner "Are you downhearted?" and he will first pretend he hasn't heard, and then tell you to push off. I mean, it is not as though London is normally full of happy dancing people. This is no peppy city built on hope and waited by angels' wings. It is despair, with pavements. Of course Londoners can follow the policeman's injunction to ignore the bombs; but only because an ability to ignore every aspect of one's environment is the first requirement of living here. The funny thing about the bombing campaign, I reflected (while unconsciously picking my way through some wet rubbish and wiping my shoe on a homeless person), is that the bombers seriously think to disrupt this city by importing misery to it. Ha ha, some joke. London absorbs more misery every day than is dreamt of in any bomber's wildest philosophy.

The only surefire way for terrorists to clear the streets in London would be for them to dress up as over-sized Easter Bunnies and distribute presents on street corners. The shock to the system would be devastating. We would scream, hide, refuse to come out, and beg the government to capitulate at once.

But bomb us, and we shrug. We behave normally because there is no practical alternative. As Martin Luther might have said, "Here I strap-hang on the Northern Line. I can do no other." One is sometimes amazed at the way other people, in far-off places, continue to live normal lives under what appear to be impossible circumstances. But do we admire them for their pluck? Well, not always. The idea that in South Africa white women sit around reading magazine articles about cellulite reduction, when they should surely be devoting some serious thought to emigrating, makes me consider them stupid, not brave. Similarly, I recently saw a television film about a rich Lebanese Christian family who refused to leave their big house in Beirut at the peak of the shelling — and I must say I thought they were rather stupid too. In the end, if we follow the official advice about behaving normally, it is because: a) it doesn't require effort; b) we can't think of anything else; and c) it is a normal human reaction anyway, which we take pride in at our peril. So, are we downhearted? Well, to be honest, I am a bit now. I keep trying to whistle "Colonel Bogey", but the sound won't come out.

### The way men close ranks against talented women hurts business, says Janet Daley

## Why women can't beat the system

Forget about nurseries, flexible and maternity leave. The real obstacle to women's advancement, says the Institute of Management, is bloody-minded, self-satisfied male prejudice. If you are a working woman, you may wonder why it took a major research project to discover this. For those of you who have been dumfounded by the irrational behaviour of your male superiors, I offer my personal key to masculine logic in the workplace.

Men have three sacred principles which between them, account for most of their actions. Or, just as often, for their inaction. One of the great myths of male management is that men are decisive. Most women are driven wild by the procrastination and vacillation of their male bosses who, in spite of being chronically irresolute, insist on clutching every shred of decision-making power to their dithering bosoms.

Which brings me nicely to the First Principle of Male Management: look after number one. The interests of your institution, the public, the consumer, the country, even the world if the remit of your occupation extends that far, must always take second place to the protection of your own position. Hence, the importance of avoiding an unambiguous commitment to any one option for as long as possible, and never doing anything which might rebound on you in some future reckoning. If I stress the deliberate deviousness of this conduct, it is only in the interests of demystification. In the higher reaches of professional life where men are articulate enough to conceal their real motives, such behaviour can look simply like obtuseness or even, when very adroitly practised, to be a by-product of virtuous over-work.

More than anything else, it is this self-centredness which makes for resentment and misunderstanding between the sexes at work and, by making women appear reproachful and naive, it contributes to the feeling that they are outsiders to the system. Women seem to be almost constitutionally incapable of disregarding their responsibilities to other people. It has never occurred to me, nor to most of the women I have worked with, not to keep my

professional word. If I undertake to carry out a task then, short of life-threatening mitigating circumstances, I will do so. Whereas the men with whom I have shared my working life seem to run on another assumption altogether: they will fulfil their promised duties — attend the meeting, return the phone call — as long as nothing better comes up.

Failing to do what they said they would carries no anxiety or guilt, and nothing irritates them more than being upbraided by a woman who actually took them at their word. What is more, any chaos that ensues from this shambolic attitude to commitments is forgiven by other men at work in the spirit of the Second Principle of Male Management: don't show up the other chaps.

This rule is adopted wholesale from public-school life which is the spiritual home of all professional male behaviour even when the participants have never seen the inside of a

dormitory. Not for nothing does the IOM survey talk of "the men's club" as being the inhibitor of female advancement. Every aspect of British life which truly matters is run as a club, the unstated rules of which are acquired by a mystical process of induction. The more those rules run counter to common sense and natural human inclination, the more useful they are as a way of sorting the initiates from the ingenuos. Being more assiduous, more honest, more reliable, more anything of value to the organization, than your colleagues is disloyal and disruptive. Over-eager outsiders all fall foul of this self-defeating canon of the British workplace but women find it particularly hard to overcome the childhood imperative to be good girls whose work is beyond criticism.

Most of the IOM research findings about how little men rate women's management skills are depressingly predictable, but at least one point is worth exploring. One reason, it

seems, why women lose out in the top management stakes is that they tend to start from what the report calls, "the wrong jobs". The fields where women are strongest are personnel, training, education and administration. Only 1 per cent of the female staff located by the survey were in manufacturing or production. Women suffered by being associated with people-centred rather than thing-centred activity, which brings me to the Third Principle of Male Management: avoid human involvement at all costs. To as great an extent as possible, treat people like things which are either functional or dysfunctional. This preference of the male British manager for the inanimate, and his consequent ineptness at dealing with human beings, has had notorious consequences for industrial relations and the economy. But in spite of this, it seems to occur to no one that the people-handling skills of women might be of use in higher management.

Taken together, what the three principles produce is the classic disastrous manager: obsessed with playing the game and sucking up to his superiors, regarding his colleagues with sly competitiveness and his underlings with dehumanised indifference. Women can scarcely need management jobs more than management needs them.

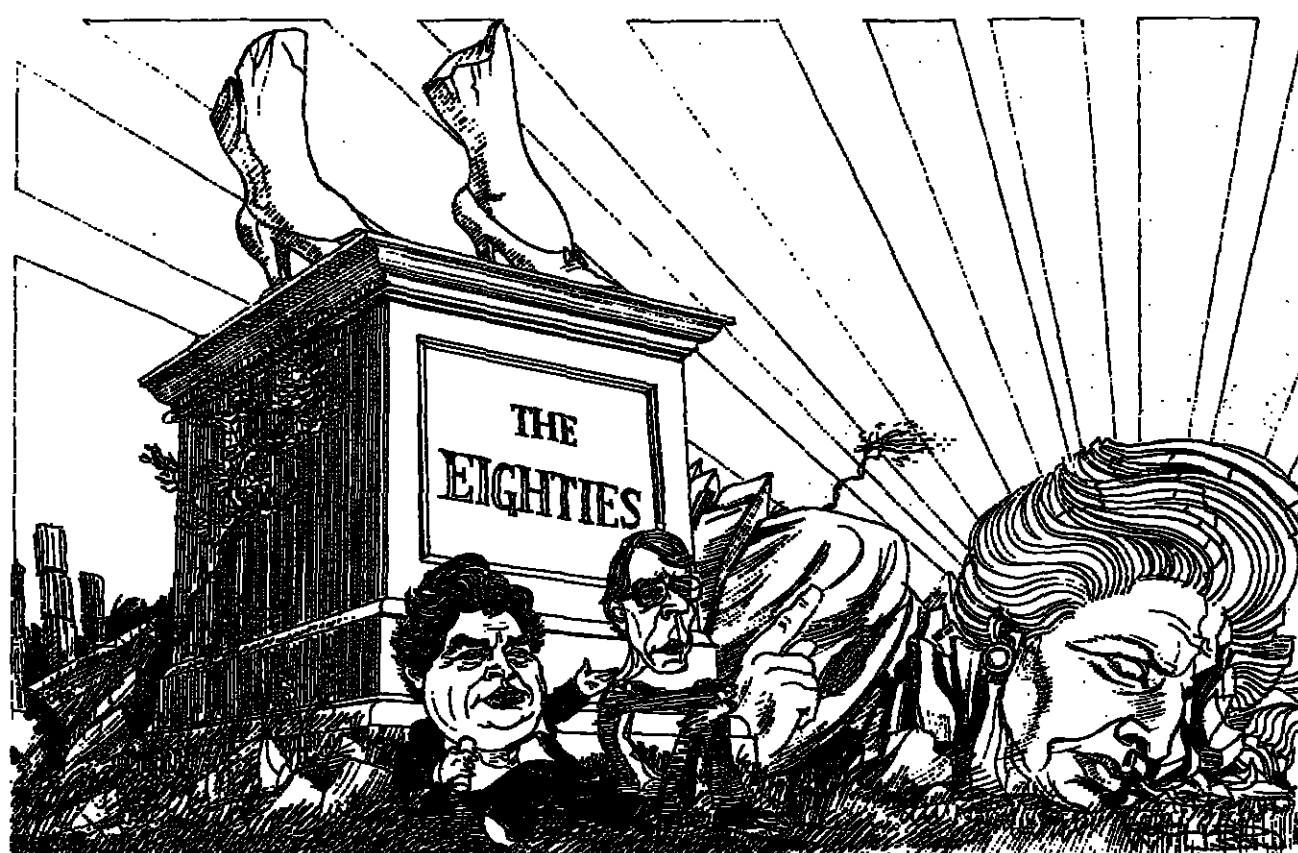
## Miracle that never was

What can still be salvaged from the 1980s dash for growth, asks Peter Riddell

If cabinet ministers can spare a moment this week from agonising about public spending and the number of Tory rebels at the end of tomorrow's Commons debate, they should dip into Nigel Lawson's mammoth new memoirs, *The View from Number 11*. This is not for either consolation or diversion; there is little of the former, though plenty of the latter. Rather, it would remind them of why they are sitting round the cabinet table. The central question now is not just whether John Major can survive, but about what the government is trying to achieve. Have the goals of the Thatcher era been abandoned? Were the battles of the 1980s, so faithfully recorded by Lord Lawson, in vain?

Extraordinary though it now seems, Lord Lawson and other ministers talked as recently as March 1988 about Britain enjoying an economic miracle comparable to West Germany in the 1950s and Japan in the 1970s. He now regrets referring to such a miracle. In a BBC interview he said he was carried away in an after-dinner speech winding up a debate, besides everybody else was saying it. Lord Lawson was being unduly reticent. His mention of a miracle was less casual than he suggests, while the claim had been made three days before by his deputy, one John Major. "Today, in Europe, we are the economic miracle," Britain, Mr Major said, was "in an excellent position to withstand any economic shocks from whatever quarter they may come." Most unwise, as Jeeves, and Willie Whitelaw, would no doubt have warned, ever watchful for the dangers of hubris.

Memoir writers and reviewers can allocate blame for what



went wrong and why. A more pertinent question is whether anything can be rescued from the wreckage. At present, a curious coalition of embittered Thatcherites and their long-term critics see little but disaster. Pessimism is in fashion. The Thatcherites see a betrayal of their Leader's works by her successors, while her opponents argue that their warnings have been vindicated. The latter case has been put, with characteristic elegance and erudition, by Ian Gilmour in his new book, *Dancing with Dogma*. He argues that "the sacrifice imposed upon the poor produced nothing miraculous, except for the rich. Instead of experiencing an economic miracle, Britain experienced the lowest growth rate since the war. The lunge to the right caused social retreat without economic advance."

The economic case which Lord Lawson and Mr Major made in 1988 — a budget surplus, a better growth record and a faster decline in unemployment than in the rest of Europe — now has an embarrassing period flavour. But not

everything has been lost. For all the short-term gloom, the industrial scene is very different from the late 1970s, in part following the squeeze of the early 1980s but also as a result of various supply-side measures. Some of the reforms have become entrenched — for instance, the curbs on the role of trade unions, and privatisation of three-fifths of previously state-owned industries. There was a change in the behaviour of management and a revival of enterprise in the 1980s.

The challenge for the cabinet now is not just to survive the next few days and weeks in the Commons, but to formulate a strategy which will preserve these advances despite the pressures of the recession. Lord Lawson has disputed the need for a change of direction; "what was called for was essentially more of the same". In his view that means more privatisation, more tax reform, and a firm grip on public spending, plus reforms which were too radical for the Thatcher regime, such as

raising the state pension age and further improvements in the working of the labour market. Some of this thinking is reflected in the current legislative programme, and in changes in public services such as health and education.

What is in doubt now is whether the Major cabinet can match the energy of Lady Thatcher and the coherence and single-mindedness of Lord Lawson and Lord Howe — whether the preoccupation with the short-term will undermine these longer-term goals. The mistakes of the late 1980s and early 1990s, in macroeconomic policy, as well as the confused nature of some of the privatisations and the neglect of infrastructure, will take a long time to remedy. In reaction to these failures, there is now a demand, both here and in America, for more active government. Today's presidential election could be seen as a turning point, away from the goals and policies of the 1980s.

The turmoil of the last six weeks has weakened the government's political will, whatever happens at the end of tomorrow's European debate. The retreat over pit closures has revived the battered self-confidence of the trade unions and made them more likely to challenge any public-sector pay freeze or squeeze.

Moreover, as Lord Lawson writes, "the prolonged pre-election period had seen a worrying discretionary relaxation of public spending control." This week's cabinet debate about spending is likely at most to slow the rise in public borrowing. The deterioration in the underlying structural deficit since the late 1980s may hardly be touched.

Lord Lawson says he has "no doubt that the substantial achievements of the Thatcher era will survive its sad and messy disintegration — and indeed, in the perspective of history, will become even more apparent." The medium-term verdict may be less generous since Lady Thatcher and Lord Lawson's successors are back to coping with the familiar dilemmas of the 1960s and 1970s. Britain's relative decline.

### Any woman but her

NOT only the Tory rebels are holding John Major to ransom. Some of the most powerful women in Europe have successfully called the beleaguered prime minister's bluff. They believe that Major is failing to take the first EC summit for women ministers seriously. The summit, "Women in Power", which is being held in Athens today and tomorrow, will feature such famous names as Melina Mercouri, Edith Cresson and Simone Veil, former president of the European Parliament. Gillian Shephard, the employment minister, was originally expected to fly the flag for Britain. But with the British government in its current state of unrest, the Tory whips were taking no chances. Even though Mrs Shephard would have had time to fly back from Athens for the Maastricht vote, she has been blocked from going.

On hearing the news Dame Angela Rumbold duly cleared her diary. But she too was asked to stay at home. The message went out to the European Women's Network, which is organising the two-day summit, that there would be no senior British representative. Incensed, the organisers launched a

lightning counter-attack. Downing Street was informed that an invitation would go out to Lady Thatcher instead.

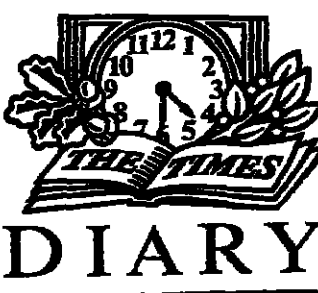
The threat worked. Memories of Lady Thatcher's handbagging performances at previous EC summits still cause foreign office mandarins to wince and Baroness Trumpington, renowned for her stirring defence of the great British sausage under threat from an EC directive, was dispatched forthwith.

"Lady Trumpington is going because of the work on the public spending round and because of Wednesday's vote," says a Downing Street spokesman. "It has nothing to do with Lady Thatcher."

Even so, the choice has gone down well with Edwina Currie. "Margaret would have been a big mistake. If she was keen to represent us in Europe she could have done it better when she was prime minister. Jean Trunpington will be splendid."

**Fighting family**

THAT archetypal Tory Winston Churchill is not a natural Democrat sympathiser. But the grandson



of the great wartime leader will be on tenterhooks tomorrow, because the outcome of the US presidential election is likely to impinge directly on his famous family. Churchill's mother Pamela Harriman, 72, one of the Democrats' most successful fundraisers, is in line for a top post in a Clinton administration.

Churchill, who spoke to his mother on the telephone yesterday, rules out a London posting. But the Tory MP for Devonport believes she could be ambassador to another foreign capital.

Clinton has much to be grateful for. A few weeks ago Harriman hosted a fundraising reception in Virginia. It was expected to attract 800 guests and raise \$1 million. Instead 1,300 turned up and the Democrat coffers were boosted by \$3.5 million. But Churchill, a Republican sympathiser, sensibly

avoids political debate with his redoubtable mother, who has been a US citizen for 20 years.

"We have had all sorts of vigorous discussions but my father always taught me never to interfere in another country's politics," Churchill says.

**● WHOEVER wins today's American presidential election, the British consulate in Miami will be able to celebrate in style. The consulate, which has a diplomatic staff of three — the consul, Philip Greig, and his two deputies — has just placed an order for more than \$2,000 worth of drinks. The extensive list includes various vintages from Mouton to Macon, two cases of Bacardi, one of Baileys, as well as 27 cases of Coors beer.**

**Gaudeant igitur**

THE RESULT of the American election is being awaited with particular interest at Oxford, where it is already being assumed that the university will have produced its first president in the former Rhodes scholar, Bill Clinton.

While the university as a whole says it is making no special plans for this evening, University College, Clinton's alma mater, has plans to fly the Stars and Stripes from its tower. The hanging of the



● Talking It Over by Julian Barnes (right) is not favourite for the "stranger" section of the annual Prix Femina, to be announced on November 16. The award, founded in 1904 and worth £75,000 (£630), was won in the 1920s by Marguerite Radclyffe Hall (left) for her book *Adam's Breed*, although she is better known for *The Well of Loneliness*.



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er happens at the end of tomorrow's European debate. The retreat over pit closures has revived the battered self-confidence of the trade unions and made them more likely to challenge any public-sector pay freeze or squeeze.

**Vintage Maxwell**

THE late and not so lamented Robert Maxwell always had a penchant for fine wine. He would be less than pleased to learn that the bulk of his cellar from Headington Hill Hall is to be sold at auction

## Vote Yes

Woodrow Wyatt on why Tories should back the prime minister

LABOUR leaders on Wednesday will try to precipitate an election by defeating Mr Major. The European Communities (Amendment) Bill, Maastricht for short, passed its second reading after the last election with a majority of 244. Many Labour MPs voted for Labour's official pro-Maastricht policy. The motion on Wednesday merely invites the government "to proceed with the Bill in order that the House should consider its provisions in further detail". Logically, Labour voting against means wishing the bill to lapse. Labour is keener on Maastricht than the government, wanting to reverse the social chapter opt-out.

Labour discredits itself by such unprincipled and unintelligent behaviour. Defeating Mr Major would weaken him within his own party, but not provoke an election. A motion of confidence the next day would be won by the government. Tory MPs intending to vote with Labour are muddled. Some would like the prime minister to resign and promptly elect a new leader. Lady Thatcher has made it abundantly clear that she would not return. Other plausible candidates would probably be more enthusiastic for closer EC integration than Mr Major.

This would not appeal to the anti-European fanatics who have subordinated their reason to their emotions. Like almost everyone, they resent the unnecessary interference of Brussels, down to telling us we may no longer shoot pigeons or sell homemade jam at Women's Institute functions. These absurdities arise from the powers Brussels assumed following the Single Market Act, energetically piloted through by Mrs Thatcher herself. They have nothing to do with Maastricht.

On the contrary, it is solely through the Treaty that they can be ended and that further attempts by an overweening Brussels to squash national identities be prevented. Mr Major battles with growing success to ensure that the Treaty contains a rolling back of Brussels' bureaucracy. Only two more days on the Treaty are planned in the Commons before the December summit meeting. The really thorough line-by-line examination of the bill will not begin until the new year or be completed before April. Mr Major is able to say at Edinburgh that unless the other two produce a legally binding formula acceptable to us and the Danes there will be no Treaty at all; one disaster can block it.

A Maastricht treaty that decentralised Brussels would have considerable advantages. Without it we will not get the beefed-up court of auditors for the first time able to examine governments on fraud within their domain against the CAP and other EC institutions, imposing hefty penalties against offending countries; and the much needed examination of overspending and misuse of the EC budget in Brussels itself. Nor will there be the new powers to punish countries not observing EC directives as we do. Maastricht does not side us to federalism, a single currency, obedience to a central bank or a return to the ERM. Tories who reject Mr Major tomorrow are fools as well as disloyal.

later this month — and the expected £30,000 proceeds will go no further than the receiver's purse. The cellar, which includes an excellent Mouton Rothschild 1945, several bottles of Chateau Margaux 1961 and a La Mission 1921, is said to be a reasonable "entertaining cellar," by Michael Egan, the Sotheby's expert who has been assembling the vintages for auction. "The better bottles will probably reach a reasonable sum, partly because of their previous owner," he says. The fact that a mere nine bottles of Dom Perignon remain will surprise few of those who knew Maxwell. A bottle of the champagne was almost permanently at his side, and was only rarely offered to guests.



Bob had a pension for good wines.





## ENVY, GREED OR PRIDE?

The choice is for Americans to make today

After a bizarre election year filled with marijuana-and-mistress allegations against Bill Clinton, rescue bids for George Bush by Arnold Schwarzenegger, a paranoid billionaire and the triumph of the talk-show, the race for the White House is over. As the great political couple runs, "the battle's set: Envy, Greed and Pride. Come Conscience, do your duty: choose your side." Today American voters must make that choice.

If the opinion polls are to be believed (and who does these days?) the winner will be Envy, the Democrat. If the President is to be believed (not an easy task), the winner will be Greed, the Republican. If the independent outsider wins 50 states, as he says he will, it is Pride that will have carried Ross Perot all the way to the White House.

All three candidates would vigorously contest these characterisations of themselves. Each has spent the campaign in a dizzying political ballet, attempting to persuade voters that they are not what they seem.

Bill Clinton, one of the most accomplished illusionists ever to mount a soapbox, has assured millions of his fellow citizens that his new Democratic party is different from the high-taxed, high-spending, hate-the-rich party that has so frequently and spectacularly lost presidential races since the Sixties. Change is his mantra; change for his party and his country.

Governor Clinton has a genuinely good side. He has worked hard on how government can be reformed and reduced. He has seen that the direction of history is towards less oppressive rule; and he has thought more than most about how history can be made to work for America. In his entourage, however, walks a vast army of mendicants for whom presidential power, added to the powers of the Democrat-controlled Congress, is an invitation to pillage from the public purse, pile deficits upon deficits and intervene in business and commerce before breakfast, lunch, dinner and meals of which not even Michael Heseltine has ever heard.

Bill Clinton will probably win. But the United States will not know whether old Democratic Envy has been truly defeated until it is too late.

Pride is not going to triumph at today's poll. Mr Perot is perhaps as proud a man as has ever bid for the White House—and that is a victory against stiff competition. He was also correct in assessing the anger and frustration of voters as they hesitated between the Arkansas conjuror and the careless aristocrat from Kennebunkport, Maine. But Mr Perot's arrogance and impetuosity, illustrated by his decision to leave the race in July and to return to it only a few weeks ago, damaged any real chance he ever had of making a difference.

George Bush is not, himself, a greedy man. He is charged by the electorate, however, with ruling America, as vice-president and president, through the "greed decade" of the 1980s. Of all the men in the Reagan entourage, Mr Bush was always one of the most sceptical about borrowing and tax-cutting could provide the way out of economic gloom. But he never won an economic argument in the Reagan years and in his own Bush years he barely ever conducted one.

He gratefully gave the task of economic management to friends (such as treasury secretary Nicholas Brady) who reassured him and fine-tuned (such as budget director Richard Darman) who frightened him with figures. During the Republican primaries at the beginning of this year, he withstood the attacks of right-wing critics in full confidence that recession would turn to recovery and that no further action (or even sign of action) would be needed. He was wrong. If he loses the election today, it will be because he never consistently tried to replace his party's reputation for Greed. He had a foreign policy because he sincerely believed he needed one; he never set a domestic agenda because he believed, just as sincerely, that it was unnecessary.

## PRINCIPLES AND PRAGMATISM

The Liberal Democrats should abstain tomorrow

An essential duty of opposition is to embarrass the government. On just such grounds John Smith has been able to justify Labour's voting against the government in tomorrow's paving debate. Though his party agrees with the thrust of the motion, the vote is seen as one of confidence in John Major's leadership, and he has no intention of propping up the prime minister.

Yet the Liberal Democrats, whose support is critical, will vote for the motion. If the government wins, Mr Major will have Paddy Ashdown to thank. Mr Ashdown seems to subscribe to George Lansbury's notion of opposition: that the party should as far as possible be scrupulous in doing in opposition what it would do in government.

It is of course a luxury of third party politics that principle can come before pragmatism. Nobody expects Mr Ashdown to be the next prime minister. Doubtless many of his supporters will be furious that he has thrown up the opportunity to do grave damage to the government. But then Liberal Democrat supporters are themselves a fickle lot, many of them voting for the third party simply as a way of registering disaffection with Labour or the Conservatives.

It is understandable that Mr Ashdown does not feel able to vote against the motion. More than any other party, the Liberal Democrats have been the party of Europe. Federalism is not a dirty word to Lib Dem ears. Mr Ashdown has exhorted Mr Major to stand up to his backbenchers over Maastricht. Now that the prime minister has followed his advice, it would be difficult to vote against.

It would, however, be easy to abstain. The motion is totally empty. The first four phrases simply "note" or "acknowledge" and the facts they note are not in dispute. The Maastricht bill did win a majority on its second reading, the House was promised a debate, the Danish government's intentions have been clarified, and so on.

The last two phrases, those that are supposed to be "substantive" are as woolly as a sheep. The House is asked to recognise that "the UK should play a leading role in the development of the European Community to achieve a free market Europe open to accession by other European democracies, thereby promoting employment, prosperity and investment into the UK." Yet the free-market Europe is already being achieved through the single market without the need for Maastricht. And widening of the EC is arguably easier without Maastricht. How could Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia be expected to accede to a single currency if even Sweden has difficulty tying its currency to the mark?

Finally, MPs are asked to invite the government to proceed with the bill "in order that the House should consider its provisions in further detail". That is uncontentious too. There is no time limit, and the phrase simply confirms what the second reading already put in motion.

What Mr Ashdown is doing may be fine and admirable. But he might stop to reflect that Lansbury led the Labour party in opposition for only four years. He then resigned on a matter of principle without ever becoming prime minister.

## THE PRISTINE NOEL

Musically correct hands off those soppy old Christmas carols

Christmas comes, but once a year is enough. Scarcely into November, and the publishing industry already has its Christmas rubbish displayed on the bookstalls. Launched this week, however, is a bulky tome that challenges the very nature of the Christmas that the British know and love—or more truly dread. *The New Oxford Book of Carols* employs the sharpest tools of modern musicological research to persuade people that they have been singing the familiar noels wrong all these years. Apparently they are using the wrong rhythms and the wrong tunes, or the right tunes turned inside-out, or dogged up by bowdlerised texts and anachronistic 19th-century harmonies.

Scholarly eyebrows have even been raised over such apparently authentic "olde English" carols as "The Holly and the Ivy": the Oxford editors detect a whiff of bogus quaintness about those references to merry organs and "sweet singing in the choir". "Incoherent and oddly irrelevant", they solemnly declare. And they unsurprisingly point out that "Good King Wenceslas"—cobbled together in the 19th century—is as likely a source of reliable information about the life of the tenth-century Bohemian despot, Vaclav the Good, as *The Wind in the Willows* is about the mating habits of moles.

Bring back the robust musical style and sure metaphors of our Tudor forebears, say the Oxford editors. Away with all this cloying Victorian sentimentality. Instead of beginning the carol service with Mrs Alexander's incomparably gloomy "Once in Royal

David's City", why not open with a snappy ditty from the 15th century, perhaps "What tydenges bryngest thou, messangere?"

Such high idealism is beyond reproach. But the small boys who rap on front doors, bawl out two lines of "Away in a Manger" on a gruesome monotone, and then demand 50p in a snarl, will be unmoved by this plea for greater scholarship.

Christmas carols are the only songs that most unmusical Britons can sing, besides "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "Land of Hope and Glory"—and then they have to rubarb for most of the words. Oxford's musicologically correct reversion to the pristine in carols, as has been seen in other genres of music, misunderstands the recent, naïf but vernacular British notion of Christmas. In spite of its vulgarity and hedonism, it is one of the few binding common factors in the national equation.

If the British started removing all the inventions of sentimental Victorians and later generations from their notion of Christmas, what would be left? Gone would be the pudding, the turkey, mince pies, the Christmas tree (introduced to England by no less a celeb than Prince Albert, or was it Queen Caroline?), Christmas cards, outrageously priced computer games for children to demand as "stocking-fillers" (what was wrong with walnuts and tangerines?), *White Christmas* yet again on the television and *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* played endlessly on the radio. Perhaps those Oxford scholars are on the right lines after all.

## Support for PM from Strasbourg

From Mr Christopher Jackson, MEP for Kent East (European People's Party (Conservative)), and others

Sir, As Sir Michael Angus and the CBI point out in their letter today, economic recovery is now a central issue for Britain. Crucial inward investment will suffer if confidence in Britain's EC participation diminishes, and confusion over Maastricht is prolonging currency instability.

The treaty was hailed as a great triumph for our prime minister when he brought it back to the House of Commons. It was a triumph. He negotiated out the potentially costly single chapter and negotiated an opt-in to the European currency if and when the House of Commons deems that desirable.

Far from being "a treaty too far", Maastricht addresses precisely those problems about which people complain. It was given a clear majority on second reading. It was in the Conservative manifesto. The Dances are set to come back on board on terms similar to those far-sightedly negotiated by John Major. For Britain it is constitutionally far less important than the Single European Act.

These should be powerful arguments to those colleagues in the House of Commons who still hesitate. Rejection would severely weaken our negotiating ability over freer markets and enlargement, and if this happened those latent forces of nationalism which have been the historic bane of Europe would receive a boost.

The Maastricht treaty is not perfect, but it is a real advance. To reject it would be a national disaster.

Yours faithfully,

CHRISTOPHER JACKSON

(Kent East).

PAUL HOWELL (Norfolk),

BILL NEWTON DUNN

(Lincolnshire),

BEN PATTERSON (Kent West),

As from: The European Parliament,

Palais de l'Europe,

Strasbourg,

November 2.

From Mr S. T. Eason

Sir, How many referendums on

Maastricht must the Dances be

allowed before the British are allowed

one?

Yours faithfully,

S. T. EASON,

10 King Edward Close,

Christ's Hospital,

Horsham, West Sussex.

October 29.

From Mr John Marshall

Sir, According to your leader, "The

priestly vocation" (October 30), the

Church is supposed to have told

Florence Nightingale to go and do

crochet in her mother's drawing room

when she offered it her services. The

Church, of course, said no such thing;

it actually told her to go and do a

woman's work. To her very great

credit, Florence Nightingale added a

new dimension to what a woman's

work might be.

Mother Teresa follows in this same

tradition; so do some Kenyan

religious sisters I saw packing their bags

for a lifetime's service in Brazil; and

so, perhaps more wonderfully still,

some French sisters I came across

some years ago ministering to Mus-

lim women in the backstreets of Cairo

—a ministry which no male religious

of any faith could perform.

If a new pope does have "a different

view on women priests", as you

suggest, it will, you can be sure, take

into account something which your

leader fails to do: the role that those

mentioned above and thousands of

other courageous women take on, as

religious sisters, Catholic and Angli-

cans, and not just the role currently

occupied by ordained women de-

acons.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN MARSHALL,

7 Mount Terrace,

Mount Street,

Taunton, Somerset.

October 30.

From Mr R. B. Christie

Sir, You quote Dr Richard Dawood

("Clean bill of health for new blood",

October 27) as saying that there is "a

remote chance of getting HIV from

American blood". He appears to be

referring to transfusions of whole

blood, not to infusion of blood

products derived from screened

American plasma.

Many patients in the United King-

dom, particularly those suffering from

haemophilia, have been treated for at

least three years successfully and

safely with blood products of Ameri-

can origin.

Standards are at least as rigorous as

those applied in the United Kingdom

and the risks of infection are no

greater than from those blood prod-

ucts produced in the United King-

dom.

Yours faithfully,

R. B. CHRISTIE,

(Clinical and Technical Affairs

Director—Europe),

Armour Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd.,

RPR House,

52 St Leonards Road,

Eastbourne, East Sussex.

October 27.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 8XN Telephone 071-782 5000

### Spending in a time of recession

From Professor Simon Wren-Lewis and Professor A. I. Clunies Ross

Sir, Over the last few months the government's economic policy has moved substantially in the right direction. In particular we believe it was right to abandon one-dimensional rules involving a single intermediate target in favour of a more discretionary approach, with the primary aim of ending the recession.

Attempts to follow simple rules to control inflation have had a disastrous effect on the UK economy: first in the early 1980s with monetary targets, and then most recently with an over-valued exchange-rate target. In both cases the economy has been allowed to fall into an unnecessarily severe recession, to which economic policy could have responded if it had not been obsessed with a single target.

Where we believe current government strategy remains misguided is in its determination to repress total public spending in the depths of a recession. Although in his Mansion House speech (report, October 30) the Chancellor rightly saw the merit of further public-sector capital investment, this is apparently to be financed by reducing current spending.

To cut benefit payments or public-sector employment or to freeze public-sector wages now will prolong the recession. Furthermore, policies such as a wage freeze confined to the public sector are not sustainable in the medium term. As a result, they do not enhance the credibility of public finance, and so do little to pave the way for further interest-rate cuts.

The Chancellor would do far better to relax public spending and liquidity in the short term, but commit the government to medium-term plans, with the assurance they would be achieved by subsequent tax increases if necessary.

Yours faithfully,  
SIMON WREN-LEWIS,  
ANTHONY CLUNIES ROSS,  
University of Strathclyde,  
Department of Economics,  
Curran Building,  
100 Cathedral Street, Glasgow.  
October 30.

From Mr J. C. Baron

Sir, The government's U-turn on economic policy has to be welcomed. However, anything other than a fundamental review of the government's relationship with industry will not correct our economic decline and only serve to deceive.

The government needs to realise that it does have a role to play in the economy. An industrial strategy, similar to that existing in Germany and France, should be adopted. It would involve closer liaison between industry and government in correcting our areas of weakness. It would not involve a return to the pre-Thatcher days of intervention, but rather greater support for what industry itself wanted to do. Wider consultation beyond the Treasury would be one consequence.

The only way we are going to be at the centre of Europe is by having an economy that is as strong as those of Germany and France.

It is said that the British seldom read the writing on the wall until our backs are against it. Let us hope that the government now understands the message.

Yours faithfully,  
J. C. BARON (Director),  
Henderson Financial  
Management Ltd.,  
3 Finsbury Avenue, EC2.  
October 23.

From Mr Simon Fussell

Sir, Your leading article, "The end of recession" (October 22), states that interest rates may have to be raised at some future point if inflationary pressures start to build up. This assumption arises from an inaccurate analysis.

Inflation has been largely caused in the past by consumer-led booms

running ahead of the ability of our industrial base to meet the increased demand. The solution has been to shut off demand; but interest-rate policy is a blunt instrument that affects consumers and damages any prospect of recovery.

Any recovery must be industry and export-led. For industry to achieve this, it needs low stable interest rates, as well as price stability, for the medium to long term.

As inflationary pressures build up, the alternative to interest rates is to use taxation policy to slow consumer spending. This can be targeted at consumers by raising income tax, whilst leaving corporate taxes alone.

Yours faithfully,  
S. FUSSELL,  
15 Kings Close,  
Buxton, Derbyshire.  
October 22.

From Mr A. T. Jackson

Sir, North Sea gas reserves are likely to be well in decline by 2010. Even if other domestic heating technologies such as heat pumps, combined heat and power (CHP), district heating and off-peak electricity provision are more fully developed they will be hard put to take over the present large role of gas in the domestic market.

It is important therefore for the gas industry to find another source of supply. Surface and underground coal gasification could fill much of this need and provide a much-needed outlet for coal, other than in coal-fired electricity stations.

SNGL (substitute natural gas) plants need about half the investment of coal-fired plants. Gas is much easier to store than electricity, so the capacity of gasification plants can be matched to average, not peak loads.

Gasification removes sulphur before the fuel is burned so high-sulphur coal can be used. Sulphur has otherwise to be removed by expensive "scrubbing" devices, so gasification can reduce air pollution more cheaply.

An SNG plant building programme would also benefit the construction industry.

Yours faithfully,

A. T. JACKSON

(Lecturer in physics),

Belfast Institute of Further

and Higher Education,

College Square East, Belfast.

November 1.

From Vice-Admiral Sir Louis

Le Bailly

Sir, Lord Lever's letter (October 23)

makes me wonder whether the

destruction of our great (and once

world-beating) shipbuilding industry

was not caused by the sort of

philosophy he experienced in the

context of the coal mines.

In the early 1960s Harold Mac-

millan wrenched the shipbuilding

industry from the Admiralty, where

there were many civilians with imagi-

native and innovative ideas who

understood what had to be done to

bring it up to date, and gave it to the

Ministry of Transport.

A few months later an eminent

minister, no doubt on the same sort

of advice as Lord Lever cites, in reply to

a question from me, asserted in effect

that shipbuilding was appropriate

only to the Third World and was not

an activity in which this country

should involve itself. That of course

has happened to the great detriment

of our nation at a time when well over

90 per cent of world trade still goes by

sea.

Until we get more engineers into

Parliament, government and the civil

service the destruction of our core

manufacturing industries will con-

tinue.

Yours truly,

LOUIS LE BAILLY,

Garlands House,

St Tudy,

Bodmin, Cornwall.

October 23.

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### Italian statistics

From Professor Paolo Garonna

Sir, In a lively and entertaining article, "How Italy gets by on a song and a prayer" (October 14), Simon Jenkins refers to Italian statistics by speaking of "statistical lies" and suggesting that "Statistics then trumpeted *il sorpasso*, a renaissance in which Italy leapt ahead of Britain to











